



# Old Vicarage School

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Keeping Children Safe in Education

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS and is available to the public on the school's website.

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Contact details for all those responsible for child protection and safeguarding in the School and the local community, as well as national helplines, are listed on pages 29 & 30 of this policy document.

## Introduction

At Old Vicarage School, we want every pupil to feel safe and protected from neglect and abuse and to know there is someone they can turn to if they are being neglected or abused. All staff (whether employed, contracted, peripatetic, volunteer or student) have an inescapable duty to protect our children from harm and prevent impairment of their mental and physical health and development. This duty applies to **everyone** working in this school.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children is defined as

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical healthier development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Be alert to signs of abuse and neglect by knowing and recognising them.
- Question behaviours if something seems unusual and ask for help.
- Take action to protect a pupil who is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so.
- Recognise vulnerable pupils and take action to promote their welfare, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk of harm.
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.
- Always act in the interest of the child when concerned about their welfare.
- Report any concern, however small it may seem.

Old Vicarage School will safeguard and promote the welfare of children having regard to the DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) (KCSIE); Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (2020); Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19); Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (September 2018); What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (March 2015); When to call the police; Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2018) (WT); Information sharing (2018); Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (July 2015/ 2021) (Prevent); The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015), and; The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015); Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education (June 2019) , Schools Covid Operational Guidance (August 2021); Actions for Early Years and Childcare Providers during Coronavirus (Covid 19) outbreak (August 2021) .

The School has regard to Charity Commission Guidance on charity and trustee duties to safeguard children.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Identify the members of the School’s Child Protection team and explain their roles.
- Set out the School’s expectations in respect of training.
- Identify the different categories of abuse and neglect and provide guidance for recognising the indicators of possible abuse.
- Explain the School’s role in identifying and preventing specific safeguarding issues, including radicalisation & extremism (Prevent), peer on peer abuse, and Mental Health.
- Describe the procedures that should be followed if anyone in the school has a concern about the safety and welfare of a pupil.
- Identify the particular vulnerabilities of those children with SEN and/or disabilities.
- Highlight the importance of “Early help”.
- Outline the School’s safer recruitment procedures for staff and volunteers.

- Explain how allegations against staff will be handled.
- Detail the School's whistleblowing procedures in relation to safeguarding.
- Set out expectations regarding record keeping.
- Explain how children will be kept safe through the everyday life of the school.
- Detail the staff code of conduct in relation to safeguarding.
- Outline how the implementation of this policy will be monitored and managed by the School Governing Body.
- Provide a list of key contact details.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies: Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, e-Safety, Health & Safety, Missing Child Policy & Procedures, Recruitment and Personal Social Health & Economic (PSHE) Education Policy including Relationships & Sex Education.

All new staff are required to read this policy carefully and acknowledge that they have done so.

## 1. The School's Child Protection Team

- 1.1 The School has appointed, and trained, a number of Designated Persons (DP) who have responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding matters.
- 1.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is member of the senior management team and has ultimate lead responsibility for child protection matters in the School. The DSL is the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection (CP) investigations and co-ordinates the School's CP representation at conferences and meetings.
- 1.3 When concerns/incidents are reported, the DSL will decide whether a referral to the Local Authority (LA) Children's Social Care; Early Help (see Point 8) or other support service is appropriate, in accordance with the referral thresholds set by the School's statutory safeguarding partners, Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP). All referrals are made through Richmond SPA (Single Point of Access), a multi-agency team of professionals who work together to assess, decide, and coordinate how best to support children, young people and their families.
- 1.4 The DSL is supported by Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL). Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility should not be delegated. The DSL or the DDSL should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- 1.5 The role of the DSL (and the DDSLs) is specified in the post holder's job description and reflects the responsibilities as set out in KCSIE, including responsibility for online safety.
- 1.6 All adults working in the School (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report all instances of actual or suspected child abuse (including Peer on Peer abuse) or neglect to the DSL or DDSL noted below by following the procedures set out in this policy. If any member of staff has ongoing concerns of harm to a child, they can report these concerns directly to Richmond SPA without going through the DSL or DDSL.
- 1.7 The School's Designated Persons (DP) for all year groups including Reception (EYFS) are:
  - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): **Gill Linthwaite, Head (and in her absence Mandy Fawcett)**
  - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), with specific responsibility for the Upper School and Mental Health: **Mandy Fawcett, Deputy Head**

- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) with specific responsibility for the Lower school and Pre School: **Lizzy Grayson**,
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), with specific responsibility for Looked after and Previously Looked After Children (and the Lower school and Pre School in the event of Ms Grayson's absence): **Franky Hendry**
- Chair of the Board of Governors: **Christian Heidl**
- Governor responsible for Child Protection & Safeguarding: **Lucy Barnes**

Parents are welcome to approach any of the above if they have concerns about the welfare of any child in the School, whether these concerns relate to their own child or any other.

- 1.8 When dealing with disclosures, concerns, suspicions and allegations, the DPs will follow the criteria, procedures and protocols set out by the KRSCP.

Details of these procedures may be found at: [www.kingstonandrichmondKRSCP.org.uk/](http://www.kingstonandrichmondKRSCP.org.uk/)

## 2. Training

- 2.1 As part of their induction process, all new staff are provided with an explanation of the systems which support safeguarding and:

- The role and identity of the DSL and DDSLs.
- This Child Protection & Safeguarding policy (which includes policy and procedures on Peer-on-Peer Abuse, the Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Procedures).
- The School's policies on: Behaviour (including measures to prevent bullying, cyber bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying), discipline and sanctions; Missing Child Policy and Procedures; and Online Safety.

The appropriate safeguarding response to children who are missing from education is also explained to staff.

- 2.2 All new and existing staff are required to read Part 1 of KCSIE 2021 ((and Annex B) by those who work directly with children). The senior management team, the DSL and the DDSLs are required to read the whole of KCSIE 2021. The School will provide guidance and support to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities.

- 2.3 The Head and all staff members will undertake appropriate child protection and safeguarding training. This training will be in accordance with KRSCP guidance and will be refreshed and updated at least annually to keep up with developments (through email, e-bulletins briefings, quizzes, staff training etc),

- 2.4 The DSL and DDSLs have undertaken Level 3 child protection training, including inter-agency working. They will attend refresher training at two yearly intervals and, in addition, keep up-to-date with safeguarding developments at least annually.

- 2.5 The DSL and the DDSLS are required to undertake specific 'Prevent' awareness training and refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern. The DSL will provide advice and training to staff, giving them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, challenge extremist ideas and to know how to refer children for further help.

- 2.6 All Governors are required to read the whole of KCSIE 2021. The Chair of Governors and the Safeguarding Governor will undertake appropriate safeguarding training to ensure they have sufficient knowledge and information to understand their responsibilities and carry out their functions.

- 2.7 All members of staff are aware that corporal punishment is never used nor is its use ever threatened.
- 2.8 All staff are trained in managing a report of peer-on-peer abuse, their role in the local early help process, what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited, or neglected, and how to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously (see sections 4 & 5, below)

### **3. Abuse and Neglect**

- 3.1 Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child (anyone under 18 years of age). Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused by those known to them or by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, by a member of staff or a group of staff, another child, or children or by a pupil or pupils. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

A teacher who has consistent regular contact with a child has more opportunity to observe signs of abuse than anyone else and, in many cases, may be the first to see the child after the abuse has occurred. Staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

#### **3.2 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm. It can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injury and disability. Some physical abuse is reactive, and some may be pre-meditated with the intent to cause harm. Types of abuse include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating, but may also arise from a parent or carer fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness in a child.

Signs of physical abuse include bruises, abrasions, burns, scalds, bite marks, fractures and scars.

Indicators of concern include:

- Explanations provided for an injury, which may not be consistent with the injury.
- Parents/carers undisturbed or uninterested by an accident or injury.
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment for an injury.
- Repeated presentation for minor injuries, which may represent a cry for help.
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.
- Children who flinch at sudden movements.

#### **3.3 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It has an important impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem.

Types of emotional abuse include:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not allowing a child to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Persistently criticising, teasing or humiliating a child.
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations such as interactions beyond a child's developmental capabilities, overprotection, limiting exploration or preventing normal social interaction.

- Causing a child to feel frightened or in danger.
- Exploitation or corruption of children.
- Allowing a child to see or hear the ill-treatment of another.
- Bullying or cyberbullying.

Indicators of emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as they are mainly behavioural. From the parent/child relationship perspective, they include:

- Abnormal attachment between the child and their parent.
- Parents who frequently complain about their child, who never praise or give attention, or who are emotionally distant from their child.

From the pupil perspective, they include:

- Failure to thrive.
- Behavioural problems such as aggression or attention-seeking.
- Low self-esteem, lack of confidence and fearfulness, distress or anxiety.
- Poor relationships such as withdrawn or isolated behaviour.
- Delay in achieving developmental milestones.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### 3.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is 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 (e.g. rape/oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching through clothing.
- 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.
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

The Sexual abuse of children or young people is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Child sex abusers come from any professional, racial or religious background. Children under 16 years of age cannot provide lawful consent to any sexual intercourse.

Recognition of sexual abuse is difficult unless the child chooses to disclose and is believed. Signs are likely to be behavioural and emotional and may be:

- Sexually explicit conversation or behaviour inappropriate the child's age.
- Self-harm including eating disorders and self-mutilation.
- Suicide attempts.
- Running away.
- Poor peer relationships including unwillingness to be involved or communicate.
- Sudden changes in behaviours or extreme mood swings.
- Withdrawal and/or depression.
- Inappropriately sexualised conduct.

### 3.5 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet basic physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development and long-term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress.

Types of neglect include a failure to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter.
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger or ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs of general neglect include a child who:

- Is unkempt or inadequately clothed.
- Is listless, apathetic or unresponsive.
- Frequently and/or inexplicably returns to school hungry.
- Has frequent accidents or injuries.
- Thrives away from the home environment but not in it.
- Fails to attend school regularly without good reason.

#### **4. Specific Safeguarding Issues**

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and know what to look for (including in relation to CCE and CSE) so that pupils in need of help and protection are identified.

Staff should also be mindful that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means that assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. DPs understand the need to provide as much information as possible as part of any referral process to enable the context to be fully assessed

Additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues relevant to our school is noted below. The DPs will attend relevant training so they can ensure that staff understand the indicators and complexities of these issues.

##### **4.1 Mental Health**

All staff are made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but should be alive to behaviours that may be of concern. Staff should be aware of possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing a DP in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

The Deputy Head has responsibility for pastoral care and mental health and is aware of appropriate guidance on mental health and behaviours in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>  
Reference can also be made to our Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy.

#### 4.2 Peer on Peer Abuse

Children can abuse other children in or out of School and online. This is generally referred to as peer-on-peer abuse. We have zero tolerance for peer-on-peer abuse, which will be dealt with a safeguarding issue under this policy.

Peer on peer abuse may include bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers, physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm, sexual violence and sexual harassment (see 4.16 below), consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and / or videos (“sexting” or “youth produced sexual imagery”), sharing explicit content, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or engage in sexual activity with a third party, upskirting, initiation / hazing type violence and rituals, calling someone sexualised names, sexual exploitation, coercion and threats or inappropriate behaviour by an older pupil towards a younger or more vulnerable pupil.

We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school or pass it off as ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’, ‘banter’ or (out of school) “boys being boys” (which in itself can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children). Abuse is abuse and we will take swift action to challenge abusive behaviour between peers and intervene where this occurs. Whilst it is more likely girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, in our school we recognise that peer on peer abuse may take any form, none of which is acceptable. We further understand that if there are no reported cases, abuse may be taking place unreported or undetected

We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is. Pupils are taught about the responsible and safe use of the internet, social media, and mobile devices in ICT and PSHE lessons, and that it is a criminal offence to send an electronic communication (words and/or images) to another person with the specific intent to cause distress or anxiety. Pupils are taught, at all stages, of the School about acceptable behaviour and how to keep themselves safe. We encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

We understand that any child who is engaging in abusive behaviour towards others may have been subject to abuse from other children or from adults. Inappropriate child behaviour will be addressed as a Child Protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. The School will take appropriate action to protect the culture of the School and ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved or affected, including the victim and perpetrator.

If staff become aware of a child-on-child incident or any pupil behaviour (actual or suspected, even if it appears relatively innocuous) or anything that gives rise to a safeguarding concern, it should be reported immediately to a DP in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

We do not tolerate the sharing of nudes or semi nudes and in the event that an incident is identified the guidance issued by UKCIS will be followed. Information can be found at <https://ineqe.com/2021/01/13/ukcis>

#### 4.3 Children missing from education (CME)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education. A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can be a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Early intervention is necessary to identify any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent further absences. School staff should follow ‘Children missing from school’ guidance (point 14.2) when children are unexpectedly absent.

The School must inform the Local Authority (LA) Children's Services of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point. This duty does not apply at the end of the final year, of education normally provided by that school unless the LA requests such information.

#### 4.4 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

This is a form of sexual abuse and occurs where an individual or group coerces, manipulates, or deceives a child or young person (under the age of 18) into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increase status of the perpetrator or facilitator. This is a form of abuse. This can range from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.

Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. It does involve varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers, sexual bullying and grooming.

Recognising Sexual Exploitation can be difficult; however, signs may include:

- Pupils appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Pupils who suffer from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Concerning use of the internet or other social media.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

#### 4.5 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Serious Violence

Child Criminal Exploitation is where children and young people are manipulated into committing crimes (such as transporting drugs or money, shoplifting, vehicle crime) and is a form of abuse. The children affected may start to carry a knife. Tactics used include bribing them with rewards, befriending them, threatening them, or coercing them. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

All staff should be aware of the indicators which signal that children are at risk from or may be involved in serious violent crime: increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, a significant change in well being or signs of self-harm, assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts and possessions could also indicate having been approached by criminals or at risk of exploitation.

Some risk factors which are potentially relevant to our pupils include having experienced child maltreatment and/ or being absent from school.

##### County Lines

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs who exploit children and young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into suburban areas and coastal towns. The name comes from the mobile phone 'lines' that are used to control deliveries. Children and young people are deliberately targeted because they raise less suspicion and, if caught, are given lighter sentences than adults.

Children as young as six years old are being exploited in this manner and staff must remain open to the possibility that it could happen here. It is important to note that the experience of girls may be different from boys, but they are still at risk of criminal exploitation.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

#### 4.6 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. Abusive behaviour can occur in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers. Children are expressly recognised as potential victims under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. Parents or carers may underestimate the effects of the abuse on their children because they don't see what's happening. Children who witness domestic abuse may become aggressive, display anti-social behaviour, suffer from depression or anxiety, and not do as well at school.

Advice on identifying children who are affected and how they can be helped is available at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/>

#### 4.7 So-Called Honour based abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. These include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Staff should keep an open mind about this form of abuse and be vigilant in identifying concerns and ensuring these are passed to the DSL without delay.

##### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Staff should be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of, or already having suffered, FGM (sometimes referred to as female circumcision). FGM may be carried out shortly after birth, during childhood or adolescence or later.

Victims are likely to come from a community known to practise FGM. Potential indicators that a pupil may be at risk include a pupil mentioning she is going to be, or has been, subject to 'a special procedure' connected with 'becoming a woman' or a parent asking for an extended period of time away from school with an unconvincing explanation for the absence. FGM may already have happened if a girl has difficulty walking, sitting or standing or spends longer than usual away from a classroom with bladder or menstrual problems.

Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK and report any concerns immediately to the DSL. If a teacher discovers that FGM appears to have been carried out on a child, this is a criminal offence, and they **must** personally report this to the police.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

##### Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

#### 4.8 Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Radicalisation can occur through many different methods and settings including social media and the internet.

##### The Prevent Duty

The School is subject to the 'Prevent' duty, which requires schools to have procedures in place to protect children from radicalism and extremism.

Protecting children from this risk is part of our safeguarding approach. The School works within the curriculum to promote tolerance and respect for diverse views while challenging prejudice of any kind.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement and act proportionately, which may include the DSL making a Prevent referral to the Channel Programme, which provides support to people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Further advice for Schools on the Prevent Duty can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

The school will have regard to the school's recruitment policy when engaging visiting speakers and will ensure that they are both suitable and appropriately supervised for the duration of their visit.

Further information can be found at: <https://educateagainsthate.com/> and [www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance)

#### 4.9 Children left at home alone

This is a fairly common occurrence but is potentially dangerous for children both physically and emotionally. If a member of staff has concerns, they should inform the Head. The Head may decide to contact the parents to express serious concern about the incident, highlighting the risks to the child.

The School will seek reassurance from the parents that the situation will not be repeated. If such reassurance is refused and the child continues to be left at home alone, the DSL should contact the KRSCP.

#### 4.10 Private Fostering

If the School becomes aware that one of its pupils is being cared, for 28 days or more, by someone who is not their parent or a close relative, it will refer the arrangement to the LA Children's Services. Close relatives are defined as stepparents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles, or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or by marriage).

#### 4.11 Children Potentially at Greater Risk of harm

Whilst all pupils should be protected, we are mindful that some children (such as those with a social worker) are potentially at greater risk of harm. Looked After and Previously Looked After children may have additional issues. We have a DSLs as the Designated Teacher for these pupils and she will take responsibility for working with the Virtual Head Teacher these children including:

- Be the central point of contact with the School

- Have lead responsibility for development & implementation of the Child's personal education plan
- Take responsibility for ensuring that staff understand the main areas affecting the learning and achievement of looked after children
- Understand attachment
- Understand the importance of seeing a looked after child as an individual
- Promote a culture in which looked after children are listened to

#### 4.12 Child Abduction / Modern Slavery and Community Safe incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for a child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of the school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example walking to and from school alone), they are given practical advice.

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms and where necessary we follow the statutory guidance under s 49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. If a potential victim is under 18 a referral must be made via the National Referral Mechanism. As children cannot consent to referral this must be treated as a safeguarding issue.

#### 4.13 Children and the Court System and Children with Family Members in Prison

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes against them or for crimes they have witnessed. We are mindful of the guidance to support children aged 5 – 11 years provided by HM Courts & Tribunals Service.

Making child arrangements via the family courts can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. Children with family members in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health. Any child in these situations will be monitored and supported from a safeguarding perspective.

#### 4.14 Cyber Crime

Cybercrime is a criminal activity committed using computers and / or the internet. Children with skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently stray into cyber dependent crime. Reference should be made to our E-safety policy.

#### 4.15 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that family may be at risk include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and anti-social behaviours as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

If a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm an immediate referral will be made (via Richmond SPA). The DSL (and her deputies) are further aware of local contact details so that concerns can be raised at the earliest opportunity. Information can be found at

<https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/housing/homelessness>

#### 4.16 Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence is a reference to offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003<sup>1</sup>. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. Sexual harassment means “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which is likely to violate a child’s dignity and or make the feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment”. Sexual violence and harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex (including primary school). It can also occur online. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or harassing a single child or a group of children. We understand that sexual violence and harassment exists on continuum, could happen here and is never acceptable whether online or in person. We do not tolerate any consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos

The Voyeurism (offences) Act 2019, which is commonly known as the “Upskirting Act” came into force in 2019<sup>2</sup>. It is a criminal offence, and anyone can be a victim.

Reference should be made to peer-on-peer abuse at 4.2 above, and to our Esafety policy and to the Code of Conduct at para 13 below. Sexual violence or harassment will be responded to as set out in detailed guidance part 5 of KCSIE 2021. Further information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

If staff become aware of any behaviour (actual or suspected, even if it appears relatively innocuous) or anything that gives rise to a safeguarding concern, it should be reported immediately to a DP in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

### **5. Responding to concerns about the safety and welfare of a child**

- 5.1 We acknowledge that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, schoolwork or other children.
- 5.2 All staff will be given training in how to make a report. This will include the importance of not promising confidentiality at the initial stage and the need to listen carefully to the child whilst not being judgmental.
- 5.3 Concerns about a child may arise from:
  - Observation of the child’s behaviour or appearance.
  - Things the child has said.
  - A third party (another pupil, parent or guardian) expresses concern.
  - Receipt of an anonymous allegation.
- 5.4 An abused child (including a child subject to peer-on-peer abuse) may choose to confide in any adult at their school in whom they have a particular trust. If this happens:

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<sup>1</sup> Rape, Assault by Penetration, Sexual Assault, Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

<sup>2</sup> Taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.

- The initial response to a report from a child (whether of peer-on-peer abuse, other sexual violence or harassment or otherwise) is incredibly important. Pupils who are victims should be reassured that they are being taken seriously, will be kept safe and need not feel ashamed: they will be protected, offered support and every effort made to ensure their education is not disrupted.
- Staff must reassure them: a child should never be made to feel ashamed or given the impression they are creating a problem, by reporting abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, or any other issue
- Staff must listen without showing signs of disbelief, disquiet, or shock; what the child has to say should be taken seriously. Remain calm and reassuring.
- Staff must not offer confidentiality to the child. This is not realistic. The child needs to hear the truth about what will happen next together with a commitment of support.
- All information received should only be disclosed to those who need to know in the course of further action.
- Parents must be involved at the soonest opportunity; this will vary according to circumstances and the decision will be taken by the DSL.
- Where there is a conflict of interest between the needs of the child and the parent, the interests of the child must be paramount.
- Appropriate action must be taken to secure the immediate safety of any child felt to be at serious risk.
- Written records are to be kept of all concerns. These records are to be kept securely and separate from the main pupil files.
- Dates, times and content of all interviews and actions in relation to the suspected abuse, should be recorded and signed by the observer and/or enforcer. Records must be accurate, factual, legible, and contemporaneous; they may be used in court at a later date.

All records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of actions, decisions, and outcomes. Records will be kept confidential and stored securely. (safeguarding checks will include reviewing records for any patterns of behaviour).

Whilst a child may confide in any adult in school whom they trust, we have a number of age-appropriate mechanisms to facilitate reports by a child. This includes discussion with a class teacher or TA whom the child sees daily, the use of worry boxes and, in the Upper School the use of one-on-one pastoral time.

- 5.5 In all cases of suspected abuse referrals should be made to Richmond Single Point of Access (SPA) within 24 hours - contact details can be found on the last page of this policy. Prior to submitting a written referral, the DSL should consider having a confidential verbal consultation with the SPA to ensure that a referral is appropriate.
- 5.6 The child's parent/carer will normally be contacted to obtain their consent before a written referral is made. However, if the DSL has reason to believe that this action might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member nothing will be said ahead of the referral, but a rationale for the decision to progress without consent should be provided with the referral.
- 5.7 Concerns must not be discussed with parent or carers before referral in the following circumstances where:
- Discussion would put a child at risk of significant harm;
  - Discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry;
  - Sexual abuse is suspected

- Female genital mutilation (FGM) is suspected to have been carried out or planned;
- Organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- Factitious illness or induced illness is suspected;
- To contact parents/carers would place you or others at risk.
- It is not possible to contact parents or carers without causing undue delay in making the referral.

5.8 Particular vigilance should be exercised in respect of:

- A pupil who discloses that they have witnessed domestic violence, or it is suspected that they may be living in a household which is affected by family violence. This must be referred to the DSL as a safeguarding issue.
- A pupil who is thought to be at immediate risk because of parental violence, intoxication, substance abuse, mental illness, or threats to remove the child during the school day, for example. Urgent police intervention must be requested.
- A child who has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention. The referral process to Richmond SPA should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency treatment.
- A child who is severely distressed as a result of reported chastisement or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance. This must be reported immediately to Richmond SPA.
- A 'Looked after child' or one who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan. The Head must immediately report any incidents or concerns to the child's allocated Social Worker and confirm in writing copied to Richmond SPA.

## 6. Required Safeguarding Actions by Staff

6.1 If staff have any concerns about a child, they should follow the actions outlined below immediately, taking account of the significance of contextual safeguarding. Staff should not assume that someone else will act and share information (within School or between agencies) that might be critical in keeping children safe. Staff should be mindful that early information sharing and listening to the views of the child are both vital for effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision. Staff should be aware that they may (and must) challenge those who appear not to be taking action.

6.2 All concerns should be recorded in writing/email and include the date, time and place, any observations and details of what was said/done, by whom, and in whose presence.

6.1 A member of staff suspects abuse, or a child tells of abuse

When there is suspicion of abuse, the member of staff must make a casual enquiry, without asking leading questions, about how an obvious injury was sustained or why the child appears upset. They should not, however, enter into detailed investigation of the symptoms or causes of the child's distress or injury as such an approach could prejudice later formal investigations.

The member of staff must:

- **Observe** carefully the child's behaviour and demeanour.
- **Record** in detail what they have seen and heard and when they did so. Any comment by the child concerned, or by an adult (who might be the abuser), should be recorded, preferably quoting words actually used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made.
- **Report** suspicions, on the same day, to a DP.

6.2 A third party expresses concern

The member of staff to whom a third party expresses concern must:

- **Observe** the behaviour and demeanour of the person expressing concern, if done in person.
- **Record** in detail what they have seen and heard and when they did so. Actual words used should be quoted where possible.
- **Report** suspicions, on the same day, to a DP.

The third party may seek confidentiality and anonymity. Whilst being sensitive to this request, no guarantee should be given. If legal proceedings follow, in the interests of the child, the identity of the third party may have to be disclosed.

Where another pupil expresses concerns, such an action may be traumatic for the informer and support should be given.

### 6.3 An anonymous allegation is received

The member of staff in receipt of anonymous allegations about child abuse must:

- **Record** in writing the words used, as far as possible, where the allegation is by telephone, or retain the paper, where it is in writing.
- **Report** suspicions, on the same day, to a DP.

### 6.4 Action by staff in all cases

The member of staff making the report must:

- **Keep a record** of when the allegations were reported to a DP.
- Ensure that information about the allegation is **not shared** with any person other than a DP.

### 6.5 Action by the Designated Person (DP)

In all cases of suspected abuse, the DP must:

- **Ensure** the child is safe while taking action.
- **Record** their actions and any additional relevant information, clearly identifying what is fact and what is suspicion.
- **Discuss** concerns immediately with the DSL.

### 6.6 Action by the DSL

On being notified of a concern, the DSL will consider the appropriate course of action in accordance with the KRSCP threshold document, which may include early help (see point 8) or a referral to the KRSCP.

In all cases of suspected abuse, the DSL must contact the KRSCP within 24 hours, stating the concerns and the basis for them. The KRSCP will decide what further action is necessary and whether this will involve a police investigation. This information should be provided to the DSL within one working day. If this is not received, the DSL should contact the KRSCP again.

Information must be shared with the minimum of people and the child concerned given clear avenues of support and communication.

Although the parent/carer will normally be contacted by the Head before a written referral is made, including reporting concerns about radicalisation, their consent is not required when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm (see points 5.5 and 5.6 for further details regarding consent).

The School recognises that information sharing between practitioners and local agencies is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

## 6.7 Immediate danger

If a child is considered to be in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm:

- A referral should be made to Richmond SPA and/or the police immediately.
- Anyone can make this referral.
- If a member of staff makes a direct referral to Richmond SPA or the Police, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible (within 24 hours).

## 6.8 If a child's situation does not appear to be improving

When concerns about a child have been raised and the situation is not improving:

- Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL.
- The DSL should press Richmond SPA for reconsideration.
- Staff may also contact Richmond SPA directly.

## 7. **Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

7.1 Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, or certain medical conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff must understand that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in these children which can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation, peer on peer abuse and bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.
- Being disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs.
- Having communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these barriers.

7.2 The School will always ascertain the view and feelings of all children and acknowledges the need for extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

## 8. **Early Help**

8.1 Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Has special educational needs (regardless of whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).
- Has a disability.
- Has challenging family circumstances, such as substance abuse, adult mental health or domestic abuse.
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- Is a young carer.
- Is [frequently] persistently missing from school.
- Is at risk of radicalisation or exploitation.
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is associated with County Lines.
- Has a mental health need.
- Has certain medical conditions.

8.2 Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help from a number of agencies, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged.

- 8.2 Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together to:
- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help.
  - Undertake and assessment of the need for early help.
  - Provide targeted early help service to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.
- 8.3 All staff should be aware that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.
- 8.4 All staff should be aware of the early help process and understand their role which includes:
- Identifying emerging problems.
  - Discussing early help requirements with the DSL
  - 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.
- 8.5 If early help is appropriate, the DSL should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The DSL should keep the case under constant review and consider referring the case to Children’s Social Care (through Richmond SPA) if the child’s situation does not improve.

## **9.0 Recruitment of School Staff**

### **9.1 Recruitment**

Old Vicarage School is committed to creating a safe environment for children and, as part of that, follows ‘Safer Recruitment’ procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. See the School’s separate Recruitment Policy for details.

Staff should keep the School informed on an on-going basis of any information both within and outside the workplace that might have implications for the safeguarding of the children in the School.

### **9.2 Early Years Recruitment**

Old Vicarage School is a provider of Early Years Education (Reception Classes) and has regard to the statutory guidance for schools about the employment of staff disqualified from childcare “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006”.

The School will not knowingly employ people to work in childcare, or be directly concerned in its management, if they are ‘disqualified’. All staff recruited to work in childcare, including in our Later Years Provision (After School Club) for children under 8 years of age, will be advised of the legislation and records of disqualification checks will be kept on the Single Central Register.

### **9.3 Supply Staff**

The School will only use employment agencies which can demonstrate that they undertake all appropriate Safer Recruitment vetting checks on their supply staff. The School will ensure that the agency worker presenting at the school is the same person in respect of whom the agency has provided checks.

### **9.4 Volunteers**

Any individual engaged by the School to work in a voluntary capacity with pupils will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures that apply to paid employees. Volunteers who

are not constantly supervised by an established member of staff will be subject to an enhanced DBS check. Volunteers will at no time be given responsibility for the personal care of pupils.

A review of the suitability will be undertaken prior to any visit by all visiting speakers (who will not be left unsupervised). The review will include an assessment of the educational value and age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered.

#### 9.5 Governors

All School Governors will be subject to enhanced DBS and prohibition from management checks. A barred list check will be undertaken if they will be engaging in regulated activity.

### **10. Allegations of abuse against staff**

10.1 Old Vicarage School takes seriously all allegations made against members of staff (including the DSL, volunteers, supply teachers, agency staff, contract, and peripatetic staff) that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children, whether made about events in their private or professional life.

10.2 KCSIE procedures will be followed to deal with any allegations that a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside school).

10.3 All allegations must be reported immediately to the Head. If the Head is unavailable, the Chair of Governors should be told at once. The LA's Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed, within one working day and before any further action is taken, of all allegations that appear to meet the criteria. Concerns may come from a variety of sources, for example a suspicion, complaint or disclosure made by a parent, child, or other adult within or outside School., or because of vetting checks undertaken. The Head Teacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate will decide if any allegation meets the harm threshold at 10.2 or may be categorised as low level.

10.4 If there is any conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head, this should be reported directly to the LADO, using the details at the end of this Policy.

10.5 If an allegation is made against the Head the member of staff must immediately inform the Chair of the Board of Governors without the Head being informed first. The Chair must inform the LADO within one working day and before any further action is taken.

10.6 Many cases may not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting either a police investigation or enquiries by the LA. In these cases, local arrangements will be followed to resolve cases without delay.

10.7 Investigations should include speaking where possible to the person who raised the concern, the individual involved and any witnesses. All discussions should be recorded in writing and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed.

10.8 Some rare allegations will be so serious they will require immediate intervention by the LA and/or police. In such cases, referral to the LADO will lead to a strategy meeting or discussion

being held in accordance with the DfE guidance and KRSCP procedures. This process will agree upon the appropriate course of action and the timescale for investigations.

- 10.9 If an allegation is made against a member of staff, quick resolution will be a priority.
- Where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated, false, or malicious, it should be resolved within one week.
  - For allegations which do not involve a possible criminal offence and do not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be instituted within three working days.
  - If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

- 10.10 In response to an allegation, all other options will be considered before suspending a member of staff; suspension will not be the default option.
- An individual will only be suspended if there is cause to suspect a child or other children are at risk of significant harm or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.
  - If suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification will be recorded, and the individual notified of the reasons.

- 10.11 We recognise fully that we have a duty of care towards all of our staff, and we will keep an open mind until a conclusion has been reached. We will always interview a member of staff before suspending him or her.

Any member of staff who is invited to a meeting, whose outcome is likely to result in his or her suspension, is entitled to be accompanied by a friend or Trade Union representative. The member of staff will be kept informed of progress of the investigation.

- 10.12 When an allegation is made, the School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality while it is being investigated or considered. (Allegations against agency staff will be run with the full involvement of the agency, in accordance with KCSIE). Parents and carers should be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations whilst investigations are ongoing.
- The Education Act 2011 prohibits the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused.
  - 'Publication' includes 'any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public' including on a social networking site.
  - These reporting restrictions will apply until the point that the accused is charged with an offence or until the Secretary of State publishes information about an investigation or decision arising from the allegations.

- 10.13 We will use the following definitions when determining the outcome of allegation investigations: substantiated, malicious, false, unsubstantiated, or unfounded.

- Allegations that are found to be malicious will be removed from personnel records.
- Allegations that are unsubstantiated, false, or malicious will not be referred to in employer references.

For all allegations other than malicious allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary will be recorded on the confidential personal file of the accused, with details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a note of actions taken and decision reached and whether the outcome was substantiated, unsubstantiated or unfounded, a declaration as to whether the information will be included in references and (where agreed by children's social care or the police) a copy given to the person concerned. The School should retain these records at least

until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of allegation if that is longer.

Substantiated allegations will be included in references provided the information is factual and does not include opinions

10.14 Pupils that are found to have made malicious allegations will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy. Staff who are found to have made malicious allegations may be subject to disciplinary proceedings, up to and including dismissal.

10.15 The resignation of a member of staff or volunteer mid-way through an investigation would not lead to the investigation being abandoned.

10.16 Concerns about the Proprietors (Governors)

Concerns about any members of the Governing body should be raised directly with the LADO.

10.17 Neutral Disclosure

In the event that any member of staff or volunteer feels that their actions may be open to misinterpretation, they may make a "neutral disclosure" to the Head, in order to explain the facts and circumstances about which they have a concern. The Head will undertake such investigations and take such actions as may be necessary and keep a written record thereof. The Head may make such a neutral disclosure to the Chair of Governors. (See also para 14.5).

10.18 Concerns that do not meet the threshold – low level concerns

All potential concerns, including those that do not meet the harm threshold at 10.2 above (low level concerns), will be dealt with promptly by a report under this policy.

Low level concerns include all doubts, or unease, however small that an adult working in or on behalf of the School may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work. This may include (but not be limited to) being over friendly with children, having favourites, taking, or retaining photographs outside school policy, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind closed doors or using inappropriate, sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low level concerns should be reported in the same way as allegations against staff under per 10.3 and 10.4 above (and reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.) The Head will conduct the following investigations

- Taking a note of the person reporting (respecting anonymity as far as possible);
- Collect as much evidence as possible, by interviewing the person who raised the concern, the individual involved and any witnesses.
- Recording the rationale for any decisions and actions will be recorded, along with the detail of the concern and the context in which it was raised.

Records of low-level concerns will be reviewed so that

- any patterns of behaviour can be identified; and
- if the harms threshold is met, it will be dealt with by referral to the LADO under 10.3 and 10.4 above.

- Other concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be responded to and the school can consider if any wider cultural issues enabled the behaviour to occur and consider and if policies should be reviewed and /or training given to minimize the risk of recurrence.

All concerns will be handled responsively, proportionately, and professionally with a view to identifying and correcting any weakness in the School's systems. Low level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues that would normally be addressed, for example misconduct or performance. Staff may self-report any circumstance which they feel may be misinterpreted in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Staff are also directed to the Whistleblowing Policy below.

## **11. Whistleblowing**

11.1 In terms of children's welfare and safeguarding, all members of staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Reporting concerns about another member of staff ensures that the School is able to address problems promptly and openly and deters any suggestion of collusion in poor practice. Apparently minor incidents of misconduct may escalate with serious consequences if not confronted.

11.2 Whistleblowing can also support the member of staff who is the subject of the concern. Their conduct may result from inexperience or lack of training that can be addressed by the school, or they may be under stress and be relieved when their conduct is questioned. Those who deliberately fail children and show no remorse or desire to improve are unlikely to welcome being exposed, but their conduct has to be confronted for the sake of the child and the welfare of the whole school community.

11.3 Individuals may worry that they have insufficient evidence to raise a concern; that they will set in train an unstoppable chain of events; that there will be adverse repercussions for their career; that they may suffer harassment or victimisation; or that their suspicion or concern might be misplaced. These concerns are entirely understandable, but staff should be reassured that whistle blowing procedures address these issues.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and subsequent amendments protect employees from reprisals for public-interest whistle blowing. A person making a disclosure is protected in law provided they reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, are substantially true.

11.4 Staff may raise concerns anonymously. However, it is harder to investigate anonymous concerns and it does not stop others from successfully guessing who raised the concern. It is easier for the individual to be protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act if the concerns are raised openly.

11.5 The school will fully support staff and do all it can to protect them from any adverse repercussions that may arise from whistleblowing. Allegations that prove to be malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

11.6 Staff who feel unable to raise any concerns about child protection failures internally, may contact the NSPCC Whistle-blowing Helpline (0800 028 0285) or Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)  
Any concerns raised via the helpline will be passed on to relevant authorities to investigate.

## **12. Notification to the Disclosure and Barring Service and TRA**

- 12.1 If the School ceases to use the service of a member of staff (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student), whether by dismissal, resignation or otherwise, because they are unsuitable to work with children, a settlement agreement will not be used and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met.
- 12.2 Separate consideration will also be given to making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Authority (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed if they had not resigned) because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for relevant offence.

Advice about allegations against a teacher can be found on the TRA website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/teaching-regulation-agency>

### **13. Support for Staff**

- 13.1 Members of staff who have been dealing with child protection issues may find the situation stressful or upsetting. We understand this and will ensure that they are supported.
- 13.2 Staff may also be concerned about being sued for defamation if their concerns are later found to be untrue. To assist in protecting against this, staff should ensure that concerns and statements are only made to the appropriate authority.

### **14. Keeping Children Safe in the Everyday Life of the School**

#### **14.1 Code of Conduct for members of staff regarding the Safeguarding of Children**

Old Vicarage School wishes to maintain the very good relationship that exists between staff (paid and voluntary) and pupils. The following Code of Conduct is aimed at preventing abuse and avoiding situations which could allow allegations of abuse to be Reporting of all concerns (including low level concerns) is designed to create a culture of openness trust and transparency in which the school's values are constantly lived, monitored, and reinforced by all staff.

- Children will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions, or rewards are allowed outside of those detailed in the School's Behaviour Policy.
- Staff are expected to use appropriate behaviours which always excludes bullying, racism and sexism and the use of inappropriate, sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.
- Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.
- Some activities require physical contact, for example where sport, performance or procedures need to be demonstrated. This should be done with the pupil's agreement and contact should be appropriate, kept to the minimum time necessary and take place in an open environment.
- Engaging with a child one on one or in a secluded area is to be avoided: if lessons or discussions on a one-to-one basis cause a member of staff concern, they should conduct these in a busy area of the school, leave the door open or sit behind a desk.
- One-to-one lessons such as music and Learning Support lessons should, whenever possible, be conducted in rooms with a suitable window so the lesson can be observed from outside. If there is no appropriate window, then the door should be left open.

- Only school devices (iPads, mobiles, cameras) should be used to take photographs of school activities. In the event that a teacher has to use a personal device (e.g., on a school trip or when waiting for their updated device), they should download the photos to the school computer as soon as possible, and then delete all photos from their personal device.
- Photographs and recordings of school activities should only be transferred to and stored on a school computer.
- The use of camera devices of any sort is not permitted in toilet, washroom or changing areas.
- Staff must ensure that visitors are made aware they may only use their own smart/mobile devices in the reception area and for recording their child's performance in an assembly or school production in the School hall.
- Personal communication with pupils can be misinterpreted. Staff should only communicate with pupils and parents on professional and school matters and should always use a school email in order to do so.
- Staff must only use the school's digital technology resources and systems for Professional purposes or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Head.
- Staff should not be overly friendly with children or have favourites.
- Staff should not accept or issue invitations from/to pupils or parents to become 'friends' on a social networking site. Social media must be used in accordance with the provisions of the Staff Handbook. Staff should not
  - a. Discuss pupils, parents or colleagues.
  - b. Post images that include a pupil(s).
  - c. Accept 'friend' requests from Old Vicarage pupils under any circumstances.
  - d. Use their work email address for any personal use on social media.
- When using social media, if staff are concerned that things they are seeing or hearing from another user have safeguarding implications they should report as a safeguarding concern under this Policy.
- Home visits should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Head.
- Staff should not babysit current pupils at the school or provide private tutoring for them or their siblings
- Contact by pupils to personal phone numbers or emails of staff should not take place. Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations must be reported to the Head.
- Staff should be aware that any sexual or inappropriate conduct with any pupil at the School is a grave breach of trust that will usually lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution.
- Staff should not disclose their personal telephone numbers and email addresses to pupils or parents. Staff supervising off-site activities or school journeys will have any urgent messages from parents or carers relayed to them by the school
- In the event of a member of staff having to drive a pupil on their own, it is wise to seat the pupil in the back of the car. This should be notified to the Head in advance or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Staff should report any actions which could be misinterpreted, any misunderstandings, or accidents involving themselves and a pupil or group of pupils to one of the DPs.
- Staff should be aware of the school's whistle-blowing procedures and share immediately any disclosure or concern that relates to a member of staff.

- Staff should be aware of the School's intimate care policies and note that a pupil must be asked if they want help before physical contact is made.

#### 14.2 Child Missing from School

Parents are responsible for making sure their children come to, and are delivered to, the school safely. If a child going missing from school or from home, it may be an indicator of abuse or neglect. The following procedures should be followed if a child goes missing, with reference made to the Safeguarding Policy if appropriate:

- All pupils are registered for the morning session on the school's database system.
- If a pupil is not present, the office staff will attempt to contact the parents or guardians of the pupil to find the reason for the absence. The School will hold more than one emergency contact number wherever reasonable possible.
- As the pupils get older, some will travel to school unaccompanied. Parents are asked to make sure the school is aware of this and the school will follow up on any non-appearance in the same way.
- Pupils are registered again before the start of the afternoon session.
- As well as these formal measures, staff should do informal checks on the class during the day particularly if they are moving around, leaving the building, or going on transport.

If a member of staff is concerned that a pupil is missing during the school day:

- They should firstly check with the school office to see if there is any explanation for the absence and then check whether the pupil is elsewhere in the school.
- If there are still concerns, then a member of the SMT should be contacted immediately and the parents phoned for further checks.
- At this point, if the child is still missing, a member of the SMT should contact the police (by calling 101 or 999) to report a missing child.

In most cases there is an explanation, but it is still better to contact the police earlier rather than later.

Further details and procedures can be found in the School's 'Missing Child Policy & Procedures' document.

#### 14.3 Curriculum

Old Vicarage School acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and in preventing abuse and radicalisation.

The School will do all it reasonably can to limit pupil's exposure to pornographic, terrorist, and extremist material by having, in place, appropriate filters and monitoring systems which are designed to protect children from harmful content without "over blocking" or imposing unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught through education.

Teachers will use the appropriate opportunities that exist in their area of responsibility to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and teach them how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. Pupils will be taught, for example:

- To recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly.
- To judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable.
- To recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being; including knowing when and where to get help.
- To use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure.
- The safe use of electronic equipment and the internet.

- To understand the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- Emotional literacy.

The school will promote “Healthy School” status through the curriculum with the aim of:

- Developing an ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils.
- Ensuring that food and drink available across the school day, reinforces the healthy lifestyle message.
- Providing high quality Physical Education and sport to promote physical activity.
- Developing our ‘listening school’ pastoral activities where pupils are encouraged to share concerns and anxieties either through their form teacher or through the use of confidential worry boxes.
- Promoting an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being.

#### 14.4 First Aid & Medical Plans

Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for a child to remove clothing for first aid treatment there will, wherever possible, be another adult present.

All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.

In accordance with the School’s Medical Conditions Policy, pupils requiring regular medication or therapies for long-term medical conditions will be made the subject of a medical plan that has been agreed with the parents.

#### 14.5 Physical Intervention

Staff should only use appropriate physical intervention in particular circumstances, and even then, the minimum force should be used to prevent harm.

If an incident occurs which might otherwise be misconstrued, or should it become necessary physically to restrain a pupil for their own protection or others’ safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Head and parents.

Any physical restraint used will comply with DfE and LA guidance.

#### 14.6 Safety in the School

Entry to School premises is controlled by doors that are secured physically or by staff supervision.

- Authorised visitors to the School will be signed into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear visible School visitor badges.
- Unidentified visitors will be challenged and escorted to the Head or School Office.
- Carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged.

The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the School or approaching pupils, will be reported to the Police.

Internal doors to classrooms will not be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas.

All rooms that are used for teaching or having discussions with pupils will, wherever possible, have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors.

Photographic images of pupils in school or on school-organised activities may only be taken with the prior consent of the school and then only in designated areas. If parents do not wish

their children to be photographed, and express this view in writing, their rights will be respected.

Appropriate risk assessments will be undertaken for all off-site school trips and activities.

#### 14.7 Computer and internet use (including Remote Learning)

All computer use and internet access within the School will be subject to appropriate content filters and internet safety rules in line with our 'Acceptable Use of ICT' and 'e-Safety' policies.

- Network access is password protected and use is monitored.
- Users have clearly defined access rights in accordance with their role.

Remote learning is delivered via our secure VLE (virtual learning environment) and video conferencing software. Access is username and password protected.

Pupils in certain age groups are provided with iPads on a 1:1 basis to support their learning at school and for educational purposes at home. All internet traffic on the iPads is directed through the school's server and use is monitored and protected.

### **15. Record Keeping**

15.1 If a pupil is withdrawn from Old Vicarage School having not reached the normal date of transfer, due to a family move or any other reason, all efforts will be made to identify any new address and the School to which they are being admitted. If the parent/carer fails to provide this information, the Head will make an urgent referral to Richmond SPA.

15.2 If this School receives educational records concerning a child who is not registered, we will return the records to the sending School with a note advising them to contact their LA Children's Services.

15.3 If there is any doubt as to the identity of a pupil, we will seek advice from Richmond SPA and other statutory agencies, as appropriate.

15.4 We will maintain accurate records of those with Parental Responsibility for all pupils along with emergency contact details.

15.5 A pupil's name will only be removed from the Admissions Register in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations or with the authorisation of the Achieving for Children's Education Welfare Service (contacted via Richmond SPA).

15.6 When preparing Child Protection Conference or Review reports, we will follow the headings recommended by the KRSCP and will, wherever possible, share the content with the parents/carer in advance of meetings.

15.7 Child Protection records will be sent to receiving schools separately and under a confidential cover (within 5 days for an inter term transfer or otherwise within 5 days of the new term). Confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

15.8 Archived records will be kept in accordance with DfE guidelines.

### **16. Managing, Monitoring and Review by The Governing Body**

16.1 The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to:

- Ensure a whole school approach to Safeguarding and Child Protection, such that the welfare of the pupils is at the forefront, underpinning all aspects of process and policy development
- Ensure appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are in place; that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, and; ensure all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, and at least annually.
- Ensure the School has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead; recognise the importance of these roles; support them and; ensure the training necessary to be effective is undertaken.
- Ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through PSHE lessons. Further guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>
- Ensure that the appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place.
- Recognise the expertise of members of staff in safeguarding matters and give them the opportunity to contribute to and shape the safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy
- Ensure (consistent with the age of our pupils) that pupils' wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take, with systems in place that are easily understood accessible to allow children to report concerns (including abuse) knowing that they will be treated seriously and can safely express their views.

16.2 The Governing Body will conduct an annual review of the School's Child Protection & Safeguarding policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. Minutes of the review will be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate both breadth and depth of the review.

16.3 The DSL will report termly, to the Safeguarding Governor, on safeguarding matters including the levels of child protection referrals made by the School. Any deficiencies, weaknesses in arrangements or lessons learned will be considered and remedied without delay, including interim updates of this Policy.

16.3 The Governing Body will ensure that:

- The School's safeguarding arrangements consider the procedures and practice of the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- They comply with their duties under legislation and that the policies, procedures and training in the School are effective and comply with the law at all times.

## 17. **Complaints**

All complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the School's Complaints Procedure, with reference to LA Services as necessary.



**Gillian Linthwaite**  
**Head**

**Last Annual Review: November 2021**  
**Next Annual Review Date: November 2022**

**Interim Reviews: March 2022, June and July 2022**

**Annual Review approved by Full Governing Body on 2 December 2021**

## CONTACT DETAILS

### OLD VICARAGE SCHOOL - DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSONS

<b>Mrs Gill Linthwaite</b> DSL & Head	Work	0208 940 0922
	Email	<a href="mailto:g.linthwaite@oldvicarageschool.com">g.linthwaite@oldvicarageschool.com</a>
<b>Mrs Mandy Fawcett</b> DDSL (DSL in Head's absence) & Deputy Head	Work	0208 940 0922
	Email	<a href="mailto:m.fawcett@oldvicarageschool.com">m.fawcett@oldvicarageschool.com</a>
<b>Miss Franky Hendry</b>	Work	0208 940 0922
	Email	<a href="mailto:f.hendry@oldvicarageschool.com">f.hendry@oldvicarageschool.com</a>
<b>Miss Lizzy Grayson</b> DDSL	Work	0208 940 0922
	Email	<a href="mailto:l.grayson@oldvicarageschool.com">l.grayson@oldvicarageschool.com</a>

### OLD VICARAGE SCHOOL - CHAIR OF GOVERNORS & SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR

Allegations against the Head must be reported to the Chair of Governors. Concerns about any members of the Governing body should be raised directly with the LADO.

<b>Mr Christian Heidl</b> Chair of Governors	Telephone	Contact via School – 020 8940 0922
	Email	<a href="mailto:c.heidl@oldvicarageschool.com">c.heidl@oldvicarageschool.com</a>
<b>Mrs Lucy Barnes</b> Safeguarding Governor	Telephone	Contact via School – 0208 940 0922
	Email	<a href="mailto:l.barnes@oldvicarageschool.com">l.barnes@oldvicarageschool.com</a>

### LOCAL AUTHORITY SERVICES - KINGSTON & RICHMOND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

<https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/>

All serious child protection concerns must be reported to the Kingston & Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership through Richmond SPA (Single Point of Access) – a multi-agency team of professionals who work together to share information and make child protection decisions.

To access the on-line SPA referral form, go to the Richmond website [www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk) Type 'Child Protection' in the search box and follow the link on that page.

Allegations against staff, including the Head, must be reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). Contact with the LADO is made through Richmond SPA.

<b>Richmond SPA &amp; LADO</b>	Working hours	020 8547 5008 (8am-5pm weekdays)
Email	<a href="mailto:spa@richmond.gov.uk">spa@richmond.gov.uk</a>	Out of hours
		020 8770 5000

<b>Achieving for Children (AfC) – Richmond and Kingston Local Safeguarding Partner</b>		
Education Safeguarding Adviser	Linda Sheehan	07774686362 <a href="mailto:linda.sheehan@achievingforchildren.org.uk">linda.sheehan@achievingforchildren.org.uk</a>
Adviser for Online Services and Safety	Peter Cowley	07595173975 <a href="mailto:peter.cowley@achievingforchildren.org.uk">peter.cowley@achievingforchildren.org.uk</a>
Virtual School Headteacher	Suzanne Parrott	07827895894 <a href="mailto:suzanne.parrott@achievingforchildren.org.uk">suzanne.parrott@achievingforchildren.org.uk</a>
Richmond SPA (Referrals)	-	020 8547 5008 Out of Hours: 020 8770 5000

Richmond SPA LADO	-	020 8891 7370 or 07774332675 <a href="mailto:lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk">lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk</a>
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#### Other useful contact details

<b>Police Non-Emergency</b>	101	<b>Anti-Terrorist Hotline</b>	0800 789 321
<b>Police Child Abuse Team</b>	020 8247 6331	<b>Forced Marriage Unit</b>	020 7008 0151 <a href="mailto:fmf@fco.gov.uk">fmf@fco.gov.uk</a>
<b>DfE Helpline (Extremism)</b>	020 7340 7264	<a href="mailto:counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk">counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Disclosure and Barring Service</b>	03000 200 190	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#how-to-make-a-referral">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#how-to-make-a-referral</a>	
<b>Teaching Regulation Agency</b>	020 7593 5393	<a href="mailto:misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk">misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk</a>	
<b>NSPCC Whistle-Blowing Helpline</b>	0800 028 0285	<a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a> Text: 88858	

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Keeping Children Safe in Education

### Appendix One – Handling allegations of Peer-on-Peer Abuse / Sexual Violence and or Harassment

We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in School. If anyone becomes aware of a child-on-child incident or any pupil behaviour (actual or suspected, even if it appears relatively innocuous) or anything that gives rise to a safeguarding concern, it should be reported immediately to a DSL/DDSL. This includes activity online and outside school. We have zero tolerance of any of peer-on-peer abuse or any indication of sexual violence or harassment, in respect of which the following guidance should be followed:

A DSL / DDSL should be made aware as soon as possible on the same day

- Victims must be reassured that they will be taken seriously and kept safe. Do not however promise confidentiality. Be aware of your role as a trusted adult.
- In cases of the sharing of nudes and semi nudes the UKCIS guidance should be followed: note that you must not ask to see any images and you may not confiscate a device.
- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/947546/Sharing\\_nudes\\_and\\_semi\\_nudes\\_how\\_to\\_respond\\_to\\_an\\_incident\\_Summary\\_V2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/947546/Sharing_nudes_and_semi_nudes_how_to_respond_to_an_incident_Summary_V2.pdf)

The DSL will investigate, wherever possible in the presence of another member of staff.

- Care will be taken not to lead the child, but rather to ask open questions. This may be the first incident reported, but not the only incident.
- A contemporaneous note of how the child presented the incident(s) should be taken.
- The child may be asked if she has been harmed.

The DSL will make an immediate risk assessment considering the extent of any allegation (including of sexual violence) and will consider in an age-appropriate manner, the needs of

- The victim and their need for protection and support, (including their wishes) which will be balanced with the obligation to protect all children.
- Whether there may have been other victims.
- The alleged perpetrator(s).
- All other children (and if appropriate staff) at the school and if they need to be protected.

The DSL will consider which of the following responses is appropriate: managing internally, engaging early help, refer to children's social care, report to the Police. Further guidance can be found here <https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>.

In the event a report is found to be unfounded, false, or malicious, consideration will be given to whether the report was a cry for help, or conversely if disciplinary action is required.

The situation will be kept under review (to identify and address any trends) and accurate records maintained securely in accordance with GDPR.

