

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

St George's School fully recognises the contribution it makes to Child Protection and is committed to taking all reasonable measures to ensure that risks to its pupils' welfare are minimised. The statutory framework for child protection was established in *The Children Act of 2004* and the School follows guidance published in the *Education Act (2002)*, *the Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' (2003)*, *Safeguarding Children in Education (2004)*, *Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings (2005)*, *Working Together (2006)* and the *Sexual Offences Act (2003)*.

The School also recognises the need to heed advice from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection agency regarding internet safety. Every pupil will receive guidance through the PSEC programme and a Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will cascade information and advice to staff and parents. The Designated Senior Person will also monitor use of the internet within St George's School via a web filtering program in conjunction with the Network Manager.

The school aims to:

- Provide a safe educational and social environment for pupils
- Maintain vigilance in detecting abuse and operate clear procedures for all staff to follow in cases of suspected abuse
- Monitor effectively pupils who are vulnerable or at risk
- Promote an ethos in which pupils feel safe, feel able to talk openly and are listened to
- Prevent unsuitable people working with children
- Ensure that all parents and guardians are aware of the School's child protection responsibilities
- Ensure that proper written records of child protection concerns and cases are kept separately from the child's school file and maintained confidentially
- Cooperate with other bodies dealing with children
- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- Have clear procedures on how to deal with any allegations of abuse against members of staff

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried, including the Designated Senior Person, the Independent Listener, Peerpoint, Teaching Staff, Pastoral Staff and the Medical Staff. In particular:

- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- All Boarding Houses display advice on where pupils can seek help.
- We operate a peer counselling scheme, whereby trained older pupils are encouraged to offer advice and support to younger pupils.
- We provide leadership training to our Head Girls' team which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.

All those who are to be employed by the School or who will come into unsupervised contact with pupils as volunteers are subject to checks through the Criminal Records Bureau and safe recruitment procedures, as compliant with Independent School Standards Regulations, will be undertaken by the School before offering anyone employment. This includes any staff employed by another organisation working with pupils.

Training on Child Protection issues will be provided at regular intervals to all members of staff and specialist training will be attended by the designated officer in accordance with statutory requirements. Every new member of staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting and contract staff working in school, receives basic training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the Senior Designated Person or the Headmistress. Training in child protection is an important part of the induction process. Online training at

Level One will be organised for every new member of staff during their first week of employment, and for resident staff before occupancy takes place.

New members of staff, Governors and volunteers are given copies of the school's policy on Interaction with Pupils: Guidance for staff. Discussion of the procedures set out in that document forms an important part of our induction procedures. The model code of conduct provides guidance for teachers and other members of staff when faced with handling any issue relating to child abuse. It is not intended to be a substitute for proper training.

The school has a Designated Senior Person for Child Protection: Cheryl Masters. St George's, Ascot comes under the Windsor and Maidenhead Child Protection Office and, where appropriate, the DSP will liaise with the local Health Authority and Police Liaison Officers. Any referral will be passed to Social Services within 24 hours.

Any member of staff who has knowledge or suspicion that a pupil is suffering significant harm or is at risk should refer their concerns immediately to the designated officer. Child Protection issues should never be discussed with anyone other than the designated officer or the Headmistress, in accordance with the St George's *Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines*.

St George's School will endeavour to support all its pupils through:

- the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- a coherent management of behaviour
- liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's interests to do so
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

St George's School recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with physical disability and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

A Welfare Plan will be compiled by the DSP and School Nurse in conjunction with the parents, in any case of serious physical or emotional concern and staff will be made aware within the necessary guidelines of confidentiality.

St George's School also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

All adults working with children have a responsibility to protect children. Within St George's School the following individuals have special responsibilities:

Cheryl Masters (Designated Senior Person for Child Protection)

Role: to coordinate all matters relating to child protection issues. These will include:

- dealing with reports of abuse against children
- dealing with complaints against staff (employees of St George's School) by children
- making referrals to child protection agencies if appropriate
- liaising with the government agency CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) regarding the potential risks associated with social networking and the grooming of young people on the internet
- keeping the Headmistress fully informed of all child protection issues that may arise
- ensuring all staff receive training in basic child protection
- ensuring that all new staff are properly inducted apropos child protection
- liaising with the school governor with special responsibility for child protection and the independent listener on all matters relating to child protection

- ensuring the independent listener and school governor with responsibility for child protection, receive appropriate training in child protection

Gerald Barber (School Governor with responsibility for child protection)

Role:

- to liaise with the Designated Senior Person on matters relating to child protection issues
- to participate in the annual review of policy
- to sit on the Safeguarding Committee

The Governing body will undertake an annual review of the school' Child Protection policies and procedures and will review the efficiency with which the related duties have been carried out.

Emily Manners (Independent Listener)

Role:

- to act as a sympathetic adult (outside of the school) whom children may approach with their concerns;
- to inform the Designated Senior Person of any child protection issues that may be brought to her attention.

Girls have access to her telephone number from notices placed around the school.

Anyone with concerns relating to a child may contact Windsor & Maidenhead Child Protection Duty Office ((01628 798888) or Ofsted, the Government Dept responsible for the inspection of schools at Freshford House, Redcliffe Way, Bristol, BS1 6NL (08456 404040).

Related policies:

- Anti Bullying Policy*
- Confidentiality Policy*
- Equal Opportunities Policy*
- Policy for Social Events*
- Induction of new teaching/pastoral staff*
- Interaction with Pupils: Guidelines for Staff*
- Use of ICT, Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices*
- Photo taking Policy*
- ICT network Policy*
- Recruitment of Staff Policy*
- Resident staff visitors Policy*