

Rokeby Safeguarding Children Policy (With procedures for action in cases of suspected Child Abuse)

1. Introduction

All members of the school staff should be alert to the possibility of signs of abuse by a parent, sibling, other relative, carers, acquaintances or strangers. They must also be aware of the school's procedures in such cases and the requirements to report their suspicions, however tenuous, to the Designated Safeguarding Teacher (DST), who is **Mrs Rosalind Patten**. The role of Deputy is held by **Mrs Vicki Waldron**.

The designated Governor is **Mr Mark James**.

The safety and welfare of all boys at Rokeby is paramount, and every member of staff has a responsibility to ensure that cases of child abuse are recognised and dealt with as quickly as possible. We also have a link with the Local Authority in Kingston which is Mr Ming Zhang, who is the Principal Education Welfare Officer.

2. Definitions

The definitions of abuse are as follows:

Physical Abuse

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

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child. This statistically rare, but potentially dangerous, situation is now described as induced illness in a child by a carer, previously known as 'factitious' or 'induced illness by proxy', or 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy'.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent and emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on a child's emotional development, and may involve:

- conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children
- causing children to feel frightened or in danger

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

Neglect

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic, physical and/or physiological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the boy's health and development.

This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

3. Confidentiality

It is of the utmost importance that anyone concerned with a suspected case of abuse maintains confidentiality at all times on a 'need to know' basis. The Headmaster and the DST should be informed under the arrangements described in Section 6 by the person suspecting abuse. The Headmaster and the DST will then discuss who else in the school should be informed.

4. Recognition

- a) A teacher who has consistent regular contact with a boy may have the opportunity to observe signs of abuse and in many cases may be the first to see the boy after abuse has occurred.
- b) An abused boy may choose to confide in any adult in whom they have a particular trust.
- c) Signs of physical injury should be described in detail, or sketched. Any comment by the boy concerned or by an adult about how the injury occurred **should be recorded**, preferably quoting words actually used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made.
- d) Recognition of sexual abuse can be difficult, as there may not be any physical signs or, if there are, they may be observed only when the boy undresses. Particular attention should be paid to boys who appear reluctant to change clothes for any games activity – this may indicate either physical or sexual abuse. Indications of sexual abuse are more likely to be emotional and/or behavioural.
- e) The following is a list, which is by no means exhaustive, of signs of possible sexual abuse:
 - Torn, stained or bloody underclothes
 - Pain or itching of genital area
 - Difficulty walking or sitting
 - Any unexplained change in behaviour, taking into account the age and any previous knowledge of the boy. For example, a normally quiet boy may become loud and aggressive or a boisterous boy may suddenly become quiet and passive
 - Sexually explicit talk and behaviour, inappropriate to the boy's age.
 - Uncharacteristic eating disorders
 - Self-inflicted wounds
 - Depression and suicide attempts
- f) **Recognising Emotional Abuse**

This is possibly the most difficult type of abuse to recognise. The signs are behavioural rather than physical, although the manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. An emotionally abused boy may show some or all of the following characteristics:

 - Low self-esteem and lack of confidence (always thinks their work is "rubbish" and needs constant reassurance)
 - The boy may be a "loner"

- The boy may be used as a “scapegoat” by other boys
 - Withdrawn, introverted and depressed
- g) Absenteeism
If a boy is absent regularly this should be considered as a possible indicator of further problems.

5. Procedures

Concerns

If a member of staff has a concern regarding one of the above or a related issue, they should raise the matter with the DST or the Deputy DST in her absence.

The DST will:

- Record the issue
- Monitor and follow up within a fortnight
- Advise the appropriate staff on the procedure
- Consider whether to take the matter further
- Keep the boy informed of what is happening throughout the procedure

Allegations

- a) Every staff member has a duty to listen to the boys – to provide reassurance and to record their statements but **NOT** to probe or to put words into the boy’s mouth. They must not tell the boy that everything will be kept confidential. They must respect the confidential nature of this duty but must pass information on to the DST as soon as possible.
- b) The member of staff listening to the allegation should remain calm, should listen carefully to what is said, should avoid promising to keep secrets but rather find an appropriate early opportunity to explain to the boy that the information will need to be shared with others.
- c) After the allegation has been made, the person to whom it has been made should make an immediate and accurate record of what is said and should inform the DST as soon as possible who will discuss the matter with the Headmaster. The boy will be kept informed of what is happening.
- d) A decision will then be taken whether or not to proceed. If the decision is to proceed, the DST (or Deputy DST, in their absence) will make a formal report immediately by telephone to the senior social worker at the local divisional office (Kingston Borough Council 020 8547 5243), and without delay (or at any rate, within 24 hours) confirm the report in writing giving details of the case, the action taken and the present situation to the senior social worker at the office contacted or to the person designated to receive the report by the senior social worker initially contacted by phone.
- e) If a decision to proceed is taken, the parents or guardians of the boy should be informed of the events. They need to be told of the school procedure if they are unaware of it, and permission should be sought for a medical examination if the complaint is of a physical type - this is necessary for all boys under 16. Before a medical examination is carried out the boy should normally give his consent and the seeking of consent is the duty of the medical officer. If the parents or guardians are the subject of the complaint, the boy’s permission should normally be sought for an immediately medical examination, the seeking of consent being the duty of the medical officer concerned.

- f) If the complaint concerns a member of staff or another pupil, then he/she should be informed as soon as possible and immediately after a medical examination if one is carried out. He/she must be told whether or not a medical examination is being carried out. He/she should not be invited to make a response, but should be warned that anything he/she says will be recorded.
- g) At this point of the procedure, the Headmaster and the designated Governor and/or the Chairman should meet and a decision will be taken as to whether or not to report the matter to the police. If the matter is reported to the police, the member of staff or pupil should be suspended, if not dismissed immediately, under the terms of disciplinary procedure (Schedule E).
- h) At a later meeting, if the Headmaster and Governors are satisfied the complaint is not well-founded, either because the boy retracts the allegation or because the medical evidence questions the boy's version of events. The member of staff should be informed that the matter is closed and consideration should be given to the place of the boy making the allegation within the school.
- i) An allegation raised by a boy regarding a sibling or friend will be treated in the same way as for the boy themselves. The boy may make an 'off the cuff' remark and will need to be made aware that what they say may well need to be recorded and confidentiality is not guaranteed.
- j) If the complaint involves the Headmaster, the procedure at point (g) will exclude the Headmaster and refer directly to the designated Governor and the Chairman.

Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils

A new provision which came into force on 1 September 1998 (Section 550A of the Education Act 1996), clarifies the powers of teachers, and other staff who have lawful control or charge of pupils, to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a crime; causing injury or damage or causing disruption.

Neither the Act, nor this Policy document, authorises the use of corporal punishment in any circumstances nor are they intended to encourage the use of inappropriate force.

i. Physical intervention

All members of staff who may have to intervene physically with pupils must clearly understand the options and strategies open to them. They must know what is acceptable and what is not. The Governing Body, Parents and Pupils also need to be aware of what is not acceptable.

ii. Allowable physical intervention

Section 550A allows teachers and others who are authorised by the Headmaster to have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility)
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property (including a pupil's own property);
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

The provision applies when on the school premises and equally when on an authorised activity outside of the school.

iii. **Authorised staff**

All members of staff who have been authorised by the Headmaster to have control over, or charge of, pupils are allowed to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Such staff, whether permanent or temporary, including those who are not teachers, are subject to Section 550A exactly as teachers are.

iv. **Recording incidents**

The school will keep a written report of any occasion (except minor or trivial incidents) where force is used. The DST, or her deputy if she is available, will keep an up-to-date record of all such incidents. Immediately following any such incident the member of staff concerned should tell the DST, her deputy, or another senior member of staff if they are unavailable, and provide a written report as soon as possible. That should include:

- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place
- The name of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident;
- The reason why force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff)
- How the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long
- The pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident
- Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, or a member of staff and of any damage to property

The DST, her deputy, or member of staff to whom the incident is reported, will need to consider whether the parents of the child concerned should be contacted immediately or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told, either verbally or in writing.

Staff taking Pupils in their own car

The school has an 'occasional business use' insurance policy for staff if they are required to take a child in their own car. The car must be insured by the owner, have a current MOT (if required) and have a current Road Tax Licence. The member of staff must have permission from the parent/guardian of the pupil before they take the child in the car. Under no circumstances must a child be taken in a staff car if permission has not been sought or given.

The school has a booster seat for children under the required weight restriction (usually under 6 years old, but this is weight-dependent rather than age). See table below:

Booster seat	15-25 kg (33-55 lb)	4-6 years
Booster seat	15-36 kg (33-79 lb)	4-11 years

Seat belts are designed for passengers 150cm (approx 5ft) and taller. Children are usually big enough to use the seat belt on its own by the time they are about 11 years old, although this varies from child to child. Three-point seat belts (lap and diagonal) provide greater protection than lap belts, however lap belts are far better than no belt at all. The lap belt should be placed over the pelvis (from hip-bone to hip-bone), not the stomach, and worn as tightly as possible.

Staff awareness

Staff must be aware that they should take precautions when dealing with individual pupils or small groups. It is expected that staff members make at least one other colleague (or the school office) aware when they are:

- i) engaging in one-to-one tuition (this must be with the door propped open)
- ii) engaging in sports coaching (this must take place in an open setting, including a sports hall, or with a door propped open)
- iii) when conveying a pupil by car.

If a member of staff needs to communicate with a pupil by telephone or text they should make another colleague, or the school office, aware.

Recruitment

The school follows the 'safer recruitment' guidelines and has updated all its recruitment documents (including letters to applicants and references) accordingly.

The school will insist on CRB checks on all new employees as a term of their employment. All present employees will also be CRB checked as of November 2008 (or, if pertinent, List 99 will be consulted).

These procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation but working with the school's pupils at its behest. The school will seek assurance that such staff are checked appropriately by their employing organisation.

Training

The school will provide regular training for all those involved in working with the boys, including the training of the DST every two years (and the Deputy DST) and the training of staff every three years. All new staff will be made aware of this policy and procedure via the DST during their induction phase, including non-teachers.

Policy Review

This policy is subject to an annual review where the Headmaster, DST, Deputy DST, Head of Pre-prep and the Governor responsible for Safeguarding Children will meet to consider whether the policy or procedures are working well and also to look at the records of issues raised, usually in the Summer Term. The policy will be updated to remedy any weaknesses in child protection arrangements and staff will be trained as appropriate and without delay.

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

The school will report to the ISA any person (employed, contracted, volunteer or student) whose services we no longer need because they have been found to be guilty of misconduct by the school.

Health & Safety Committee

A confidential report providing an update on boys' welfare issues and the procedure/policy to identify any issues arising will be provided for the Health & Safety Committee and will be raised under 'Safeguarding Children' as a regular item.

Parental Disputes

Parents who have an ongoing dispute with each other may occasionally seek the support of teaching staff. The school is sympathetic to the parents' situation but the boy must come first. If teachers are approached they should inform the DST of the matter and also provide any supporting material such as file notes. The Headmaster will be informed by the DST.

Governors

The designated Governor responsible for Safeguarding Children will report on any issues, updates or changes under 'Health and Safety' to the Capital Assets Committee and thereby to the board unless there are exceptional matters as outlined on the procedures above which will be dealt with urgently. Following the annual review outlined under 'Policy Review', the governing body will review this policy and procedures and consider the efficiency with which the related duties are being discharged, usually in the Autumn Term following the Policy Review.

Visitors' Badges

All visitors to the school must sign in and wear their visitor's badge clearly displayed. If a visitor is not wearing a badge they must be escorted back to the reception to sign in and collect one.

This Policy also includes EYFS.

JRP

Headmaster

Updated April 2010

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

The purpose of this risk assessment is to ensure that the key elements of our policy are adhered to, and that possible failures, with the ensuing consequences that may follow, are highlighted.

It is essential that all Rokeby staff have training in Safeguarding Children. This should be repeated every three years, and at two-yearly interval for the Designated Safeguarding Teacher and the Deputy DST. An up-to-date record of training must be kept by the DST.

If a member of staff does not undertake training in school, training elsewhere should be carried out. Those who report that they have trained in another establishment need to show their certificate to the DST who will keep a copy of it and amend the record accordingly.

As part of their induction process, new staff will be introduced to the SC policy and it will be discussed with them by the DST.

The Safeguarding Children Policy must be reviewed annually by the Governors and Head, DST and Deputy DST and Head of Pre-Prep.

Evidence of meetings between the DST and the governor responsible for SC should be shown in the form of minutes.

The Board of Governors is updated with a report at Health and Safety meetings regarding any SC issues.

The risk of failure in SC should be monitored with regular fortnightly year head meetings with form tutors, weekly individual meetings of the year heads – on a rota basis – with the Director of Pastoral Care (who is also the DST), Pastoral Care Committee meetings held once a month with the DoPC and meetings with the Deputy of the Pre Prep and the DoPC held every three weeks.

The DST should be available to talk to any member of staff, at any time, with regard to concerns that they may have about either a pupil or another member of staff. Should the DST have concerns about the Headmaster, the Chairman of the Governors would be informed.

Guidelines are in the Staff handbook relating to drugs, alcohol and substance abuse: any issues should be reported immediately to the Headmaster. Staff disciplinary procedures may follow; these are covered in that policy. Parental workshops are being held to increase parental awareness and understanding of these issues.

When school trips are arranged a risk assessment is carried out. The HM has to approve all trips. The Deputy Head meets with trip leaders before a trip takes place.

If there is a case of sexual, or any other form of abuse, of pupils by staff the DoPC and the DST must be made aware of it and they should inform appropriate authorities immediately, as well as the HM and the governor responsible for SC.

Cases of bullying should be reported to the DoPC.

All new staff are introduced to the Anti-Bullying Policy as part of their induction process.

R. M. Patten, DST, DoPC, April 2010