

# ROEDEAN

## CHILD PROTECTION (SAFEGUARDING) POLICY

***If you ever have any concerns about the safety of a child or young person, contact the Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) as soon as possible. Reception or Security will know how Sylvia Brett the CPO (DP) or her Deputy CPOs can be contacted.***

### **Policy Aims**

Central to the school's wider aims of providing a stimulating education and exciting extra-curricular opportunities in an environment which is supportive and friendly is the paramount importance which the school places on the safeguarding of its pupils. Roedean recognises its responsibility for the safeguarding of the children in its care and its requirement to respond immediately to any aspect of concern relating to a child's safeguarding whether it happens within the school environment and community or outside.

At the heart of the School's wider aims are the values to which all members of the community aspire. These underpin Roedean's commitment to the safeguarding of the children in its care: fairness, honesty, respect, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness.

The Child Protection Policy is written in accordance with The Children Act 1989; Independent School Inspectorate Regulations (effective as of 1 January 2010); DfES guidelines; EYFS Statutory Framework and with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) along with the publications Working Together, Every Child Matters and the Safeguarding Children Policy (copies of which are available on request from the Child Protection Officer (Designated Person)'s office, the School Intranet and in the Staff Administration Room).

The policy ensures that the school recognizes and implements the following points:

- Safe recruitment procedures practices in checking the suitability of all staff members.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Development, monitoring and review of procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Support of pupils who have been abused.
- Establishment and maintenance of a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

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- An understanding that ‘adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions’<sup>1</sup>.
- A support network for children so that they know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Opportunities in the PSHE curriculum and Tutor programme for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect (including abuse that may arise from the use of the Internet).

## **Objectives**

The school recognizes that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, safe and predictable element in their life. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may appear withdrawn. In these instances, the school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum .
- The school aims and ethos which promotes a positive, secure environment and gives the pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school ensuring that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are still valued.
- Inter-agency liaison.
- Information sharing, insofar as if a student suffering abuse leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and key-workers are informed where appropriate.

## **Wider awareness of the Child Protection Policy**

The Child Protection Policy is available to all parents and staff members, in all roles, both electronically on the Website, the Intranet and in hard copy in the School Office. In addition, we recognize, understand and implement the obligations placed on the school in terms of Child Protection, which is promoted in the ‘Life’ section of our prospectus, the Parent Contract and the Health section of the Student Handbook.

## **Safer Recruitment**

The school operates a strict safer recruitment system in accordance with CWDC on-line training. All members of staff, in all roles, are CRB checked and appropriate records are kept in personnel files and in the Single Central Register of Appointments and in adherence with the Data Protection Act. During the interview process the successful applicant will be seen by the Head of Department, and then by a member of staff who has completed the on-line Safer Recruitment training. The Bursar’s PA then ensures that identity checks are conducted, references and qualifications are verified, and CRB Disclosures are obtained. Once all of this is in place an offer letter can be written. In addition, the application form was revised in September 2006 to ensure that it covered any gaps in employment.

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<sup>1</sup> *‘Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people’ DCSF 2009*

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## **Child Protection Officer (Designated Person)**

The Deputy Head is the Child Protection Officer and Designated Person (CPO/ DP) for Roedean Junior and Senior Schools; she is supported in the Senior School by the Assistant Head for Holistic Care and the Head of Middle School who act as Deputy Child Protection Officers. The Deputy Head has completed initial Child Protection training in 2008 and 2010-2011. The Assistant Head for Holistic Care and the Head of Middle School have also completed Child Protection training in 2008 and 2010 which will be updated every two years. In addition the Headmistress completed Initial Child Protection Training in 2007; this will be updated in 2011.

The Child Protection Officer with specific delegated responsibility for the Junior School is the Headmaster. The Headmaster of the Junior School will complete initial Child Protection training in March 2010 and will be updated every two years. The Officers liaise very closely.

Mrs Sheila Fowler-Watt is the Governor responsible for Child Protection at Roedean Junior and Senior Schools; she completed initial training in 2006, further training in 2008 and 2010 and this too will be updated every two years. The last Child Protection Governor's Audit was completed in June 2010 and will be reviewed annually.

If colleagues, including the Head, have an allegation made against them, the procedure which is followed is included in Part Two. If an allegation is made against the CPO(DP), the Deputy CPO or the CP Governor, the matter needs to be drawn to the attention of the Head.

The primary responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) is as follows:

- To be a central point of information within the school so that all people involved in a pupil's life can liaise directly with the CPO (DP) in order that the CPO (DP) can have an understanding of all aspects of a pupil's experience and from that assess patterns of behaviour or concerns.
- To liaise closely with other external agencies who are concerned with a pupil's safeguarding: e.g. LSCB, police, health services, previous schools.
- To refer all matters of concern to the LSCB within 24 hours of a disclosure and to discuss possible matters of concern with the LSCB as soon as is necessary. The Designated Person will not make his/ her own decision over what appears to be a borderline case but will discuss doubts and concerns with the LADO. This may be done tentatively and without giving names in the first instance.
- In case of serious harm the police should be informed from the outset.
- To raise awareness within the whole School community of the importance of safeguarding children.
- To ensure that all staff (including temporary) are regularly trained in Child Protection policies and procedures.
- To ensure that all staff (including temporary) receive a Child Protection Induction at whatever stage they join the School community during the academic year.
- To work closely with the Bursar to ensure that Safer recruitment procedures are carried out comprehensively.

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- To ensure that the School follows procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse in accordance with LSCB guidelines.
- To review regularly the child protection arrangements for Roedean and remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses without delay.
- To inform the Local Authority Designated Officer and OfSTED of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations within at least 14 days.
- To ensure that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site (for example in a separate institution). This includes the taxi company used by the school, *Streamline*.
- To inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority within one month of leaving the school, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.
- To ensure that Roedean does not knowingly employ or take on as a volunteer in an ISA regulated activity someone who has been barred from that activity.

## **Induction, INSET and continuing safe working practice**

The INSET and induction programmes ensure that all staff members, including the Headmistress, understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse, their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for Child Protection and the continuing requirement for safe working practice and appropriate behaviour from all staff.

The CPO (DP) runs Child Protection training to all staff (including part-time and voluntary) as part of the yearly INSET in September, ensuring that staff members are kept regularly informed of any changes to guidelines and/or systems within the school. This includes guidance on safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people (see part 2 for guidance). The school recognises that 'there may be occasions and circumstances in which adults have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge. Such judgements, in these circumstances, should always be recorded and shared with a senior manager. Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate and safe and applied equitably.'<sup>2</sup>

Staff (including part time and voluntary) who join mid-year receive Child Protection training as part of their induction process. This is organised by either the Personnel Manager or the individual line manager. The Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) facilitates the training and, once completed, the individual staff member will tick this off on their induction checklist.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people' DCSF 2009

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Once Child Protection training has taken place, the staff member concerned completes a Child Protection Induction Form. The form acknowledges that the staff member is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Officer (Designated Person); knows what to do in the event of hearing a child protection allegation while observing anything which might lead them to suspect child protection issues; and understands the school's expectations with regard to appropriate relationships between staff and pupils and to confidentiality. The Child Protection Induction form is then placed on the staff member's personnel file in the Personnel Manager's office. These records are kept effectively by the Personnel Manager and reviewed regularly.

The Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) also arranges training with Senior Prefects (pupils) who have responsibility within the school community to ensure that they are aware of the School's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding children and young people.

The Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) holds a copy of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and local Area Child Protection Procedures.

## **Records and procedures**

Once an employee has left the school, Roedean recognises and accepts the requirement to report to the Secretary of State, via the DFES, within one month of leaving the school, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because s/he is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Students with child protection issues have separate files as well as main school files. The main school file is given a red dot indicating that there are ongoing CP concerns and caution should be taken when issuing information from the School Office and House (in these cases the CPO (DP) should be consulted). The corresponding CP file for each of these girls is kept locked in the CPO (DP)'s office.

The school meets the requirement that any weaknesses or discrepancies in Child Protection Procedures which may occur from time to time is brought to the attention of the CPO (DP) or SLT team and rectified without delay.

## **Young people who abuse other young people**

In order to safeguard children from all members of their community, Roedean seeks to engender an atmosphere where young people can discuss their concerns with any of the adults around them. The school recognises that situations where one pupil may be endangering another are very sensitive and the needs of all the pupils involved will be taken very seriously under the guidance of the LSCB.

If a young person is suspected of causing harm to another young person the normal child protection procedures will be followed and advice will be sought from the LSCB.

Older pupils will not normally supervise younger pupils unless in a structured and managed situation where appropriate training and supervision has been provided.

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## **Part Two : Guidelines for putting the Child Protection Policy into Practice**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

*From: Working Together to Safeguard Children DFES 2006*

### What are the indicators of a potential Child Protection issue?

#### **Physical abuse — what to look for:**

- Injuries, especially those which are atypical
- Girls who find it painful to walk, sit down, move their jaws etc
- Regular occurrence of injuries with no adequate explanation
- Reluctance to change for PE
- Uncharacteristic behaviour
- Compulsive eating or loss of appetite
- Girl who is suddenly uncoordinated
- Conflicting explanations of injuries
- Reluctance to explain

#### **Neglect — what to look for:**

- Deterioration in appearance or hygiene
- Deterioration in behaviour

#### **Emotional abuse — what to look for:**

- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Introversion
- Excessive aggression

#### **Sexual abuse – what to look for:**

- Physical symptoms in genital areas e.g. itching or bleeding
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Nightmares
- Bed wetting
- Abuse of drugs
- Stomach pains when a child is sitting or walking
- Running away from home
- Apparent fear of an individual
- Self – harming
- Sudden change in behavior
- Child not allowed to have friends

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## Some points to consider:

- Many forms of abuse have no physical symptoms
- The diagnosis of abuse is difficult — even for experts
- To delay reporting the suspicion of abuse could be disastrous

Every situation pertaining to Child Protection is different but the following guidelines should always be followed:

### Do:

- Take what is said seriously
- Listen carefully and don't interrupt
- Remain calm
- Reassure them
- Let them know you will help them
- Tell them that you will have to pass on what they have said
- Write up your notes asap – doesn't have to be on computer but with time and date.
- Report what you have heard to the CPO (DP) as soon as possible. If you cannot find the Deputy Head then the Head of Middle School or the Assistant Head for Holistic Care will be available to help.
- Talk to the CPO (DP) about support for you

### Don't:

- Don't investigate
- Don't allow shock or distaste to show
- Do not probe or ask leading questions
- Do not speculate
- Do not make negative comments
- Do not agree to keep the information secret
- Do not delay help
- Do not express disbelief
- Don't think someone else will report this

See also: *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Summary DFES 2006*

Even if you are not sure that the issue you have encountered is serious, still let the Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) know. They can then make an informed decision as to the best course of action. In the case of an allegation made against a colleague the School will follow the guidelines given in *Working Together to Safeguard Children DFES 2006 Appendix 5*.

This school recognizes that the decision to report a concern concerning the safety of a child whether it relates to a colleague or another adult or child can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisals from those responsible. This School will not tolerate harassment or victimization and will take all possible measures to protect anyone who raises concerns in good faith. All concerns will be treated in confidence within the agencies involved and we will make every effort not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness. If you voice suspicion in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If the investigation concludes that you have maliciously fabricated the allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you. The earlier a concern is reported, the easier it is to take action. (Please see the school's Whistleblowing policy.)

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The Headmistress will address an allegation against the Deputy Head, other members of staff or volunteers. In the absence of the Headmistress the allegation should be passed to the Chair of Council. If the allegation concerns the Head, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of Council without notifying the Head first. In the case of serious harm the police should be informed from the outset. If an allegation involving Child Protection is made against an employee, they will be suspended on full pay and without prejudice pending investigation. Whilst a residential member of staff (who is subject to an allegation relating to safeguarding issues) is under investigation they will be offered alternative accommodation off site. Staff should refer to their contracts and the staff handbook for the school's disciplinary procedures. If the allegation is not made against the Designated Person, he or she will be informed of any allegation made against an employee of the school because they will have received a higher level of safeguarding training. In case of serious harm the police should be informed from the outset.

If you feel that you cannot approach a member of School staff, the Local Authority Designated Officer, Maggie Baker, can be consulted (telephone 01273 293760) or OFSTED (telephone 08456 404040) can be called direct. Concerns are better supported by something in writing. If you feel this is not possible you can telephone or meet the appropriate person. Your report, written or verbal, should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names dates and places where possible, and the reason why you are concerned about the situation.

## What are we likely to do with information you provide?

- At least record it; it may not seem significant straight away but may add to further information received at a later date.
- Telephone professional agencies for advice without giving names (the CPO/DP and the school will always be named).
- Telephone professional agencies for advice, providing names so that they can check records.
- Make a full referral.
- All inter-agency contact details can be accessed through the CPO (DP).
- **All Child Protection records are kept securely and separate from pupil files in a locked location.**

The Child Protection Officer (Designated Person) will always let you know what will happen to information you provide. Where practically possible, and with the advice of professional agencies, the anonymity of a referring colleague will be protected.

## Colleagues must be aware of safe working practice with pupils in order to avoid allegations and misunderstandings:

- Avoid all physical contact with pupils which is not appropriate to the adult's professional or agreed role and responsibilities.
- Where physical contact is appropriate to the adult's professional or agreed role and responsibilities permission from the child must be sought before physical contact is made. In this situation physical contact should be 'in response to the child's needs at

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the time, be of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background<sup>3</sup>.

- Do not be alone with a pupil unless professionally necessary. Where this is the case, take appropriate steps to mitigate the situation e.g. leave doors open (for example when nappy changing or teaching alone), report timetabled or scheduled meetings to your line manager
- Do not allow pupils into your car unless as part of planned and agreed travel arrangements of which the parent/ carer is aware (there may be emergencies when an exception to this might be made).
- Do not give pupils personal contact details e.g. mobile telephone numbers, home e mail addresses
- Do not exchange personal or private information / opinions with girls which is not appropriate to the adult's professional or agreed role and responsibilities.
- If you have concerns regarding an incident or pupil behaviour in the light of these guidelines, please discuss these with the CPO (DP) and refer to the *Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people*' DCSF 2009.

## Missing Pupils

There is a policy (Missing Pupil's Policy), known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and, if necessary reporting, any boarder missing from school. A written record is made of any incident of a boarder missing from school, the action taken, and any reasons given by the pupil for being missing

## Useful contacts and resources

**Child Protection Officer/ Designated Person:** Sylvia Brett (01273 6675390)

**Deputy CPO:** Hazel Heron (01273 667587)

**Deputy CPO:** Graeme Rainey (01273 667501)

**Deputy CPO:** Huw May (01273 667692)

**Sheila Fowler-Watt:** (Member of School Council responsible for Child Protection)

**Maggie Baker** (Local Authority Designated Officer): telephone 01273 293760

**OFSTED:** telephone 08456 404040

**East Sussex Youth Support Team:** 01323 747094

**West Sussex:** 0845 075 1007

*'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Summary'* DFES 2006

*'Working Together to Safeguard Children'* DFES 2006

*'Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people'* DCSF 2009

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00311/>

*'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'* DCSF May 2008

<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/151379>

***Policy confirmed by Brighton and Hove LSCB, February 2010.***

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<sup>3</sup> *Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people*' DCSF 2009