

Charitable Objects of St. Catherine's School- The Objects for which the Company is established are to promote and provide for the advancement of education by providing, conducting, governing, carrying on and maintaining in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, a boarding or day School or Schools for girls in which the teaching shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.

WHOLE SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



The Whole School refers to all staff and students in the St. Catherine's Preparatory and Senior Schools which includes: Early Years/Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep School (Key Stage 1), Prep School (Key Stage 2); Middle School (Key Stage 3); Senior School (Key Stage 4) and the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5).

This policy was revised in April 2020 in line with the School's Policy Review Schedule, which ensures that all policies are kept up to date and replaces that which was written prior to 1998 and updated in 1999 and 2000. The policy is revised as a minimum annually but also with any new legislative change. It underwent major revisions as follows and is always subject to review with every change in Child Protection Legislation/Regulations: in 2005/6, 2006/7; significant changes in 2009 and September 2010; September 2012, July 2013, January and July 2014, March 2015, September 2016 October 2017, September 2018 and September 2019

In addition, this policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

Staff Recruitment, Induction of New Staff, Equal Opportunities, Anti-Bullying, Anti-Bullying in the Workplace, Whistleblowing, Educational Visits (Prep and Senior), Action in Case of a Missing Pupil, Code of Conduct for Staff, ICT Policy – Guidelines for the use of Digital Technology, and associated EYFS Policies and the PSHE/PSHCE (Life Matters) scheme of work in Prep and Senior Schools. School absence procedures are outlined in the Parent and Staff Handbooks. Specific care for Boarders is covered in the Resident Staff Handbook.

St. Catherine's School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and works in partnership with Surrey and Sussex police as part of Operation Encompass. DSLs will work closely with the three safeguarding partners as and when required.

The Child Protection policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School and is subject to annual review by the governing body. This policy has been developed with reference to and in line with:

- Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) procedures Manual (2019),
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006,
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE September 2019 (KCSIE)*,
- *ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools: Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements* (September 2019)
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools April 2016,
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 (Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements).
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (Updated September 2018),
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (DfE March 2015),

- Information Sharing: *advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services* (DfE March 2015)
DBS Referrals Guidance
- The Children Act 2004
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015)
- Child Sexual Exploitation: definition and guidance for practitioners (DfE Feb 2017)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE May 2018)
- Advice to Schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence (Home Office 2013)
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines (Home Office, September 2018)
- Children Missing Education (DfE 2016)
- *The Use of Social Media for on-line radicalisation* (July 2015)

and formerly

- Every Child Matters (2003-2010)

St. Catherine's School also gives regard to:

- Mental health and behaviour in schools (2018)
- Counselling in Schools: a blue print for the future (Feb 2016)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) is Appendix 1 to this policy and at least Part One of the most recent document **must** be read by all staff to ensure a full understanding of safeguarding issues. In addition, Annex A must be read by School Leaders and all those who work directly with children. KCSIE Part 1 is re-issued and is read and understood by all staff at each revision. All staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood it. This is aided by specific INSET training on KCSIE, undertaken in early September 2016, for all new members of staff in 2017, all staff once again in September 2018 and for new staff in September 2019. Changes to Sept 2019 KCSIE discussed in Whole School Staff Meeting.

New staff induction will include: an explanation of the Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Discipline, Rewards and Awards policy (prep school) and Rewards and Sanctions Policy (senior school), the role and identity of the DSL and Deputies and online safety.

The aim of the Child Protection Policy is to provide guidance for the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children. This is defined as: Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

There are five main elements to this policy:

- Ensuring the practice of safe recruitment and checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Assurance is obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures have been applied to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on another site.
The school Staff Recruitment Policy follows safer recruitment procedures in line with ISI guidance found in their Commentary on the Independent Schools Standards Regulations. It includes ensuring that at least one member of any recruitment panel involved in all stages of the recruitment process has undertaken the appropriate training in Safer Recruitment, and that all the required checks are carried out on the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work with children and young people in accordance with the guidance and regulations. Appropriate

supervision arrangements are put in place if members of staff start work before their DBS disclosure has been obtained, and in all cases a Barred List Check and Prohibition Order check will have been undertaken. Where necessary a risk assessment would also be undertaken. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe, including online.

- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as the problem emerges at any point in the child's life.
- Supporting any pupil who has been abused in accordance with her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. This includes ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers are aware of the professional boundaries and obligations in their daily interaction with pupils both in and outside school. The Child Protection Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the **Staff Code of Conduct**, with particular attention being paid to sections 9 (power and positions of trust), 10 (one-to-one situations) and 11 (relationships with pupils), 16 (photography, videos and other creative arts) and 17 (internet use).

School staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse because of the day to day contact with children. Such signs may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in their general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse
- signs of neglect
- comments children make which give cause for concern

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways, including:

- bullying, including cyber bullying;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or other physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture or film under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence and will be reported as such.
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Such behaviour will not be passed off as 'banter'. Should staff become aware that a pupil has either sent or received inappropriate messages or been involved in inappropriate behaviour, then they should refer immediately to the anti-bullying policy. If it is believed that the situation is abusive, DSLs should be contacted as soon as possible. Staff must recognise that peer on peer sexual abuse is possible within the school context. Staff must also recognise that children with SEN/D are particularly vulnerable to peer-on-peer abuse. The DSL will make a referral to Surrey Children's Services or the police if appropriate. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, the referral will be immediate. If a pupil from another school is involved, then that child's school will also be contacted. The Harm Test is explained on the DBS website Gov.uk <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#what-is-the-harm-test>

The School aims to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Creating an ethos of good behaviour through the Traditions of the School
- Promotion of mutual respect through assemblies, house meetings, outside speakers and Life Matters (PSHE) lessons
- Role modelling through school prefect teams
- Acceptable use of ICT – agreement signed by pupils and parents
- Comprehensive anti-bullying policies (prep and senior)

All staff should be aware of indicators that may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Staff should be aware that types of abuse and neglect include:

- Physical abuse, which includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm can also include fabricating or deliberately inducing illness in a child
- Emotional abuse, which can include conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature not giving them the opportunity to express their views or deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on them or them seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Sexual abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, which includes forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, which can include penetration and non-penetrative activities including masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing.
- Neglect, which is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- So-called 'honour-based' violence, including crimes that have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family, including **forced marriage, female genital mutilation**, and practices such as breast ironing
- Radicalisation, including vulnerability to extremist ideology. Staff should be alert to changes in a child's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection
- Upskirting – see above for definition

Common signs of abuse include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

Staff must also recognise the particular vulnerabilities of those with SEN/D to the above types of abuse and neglect including, but not limited to, peer on peer abuse.

Staff should also be aware that children with family members in prison, whose families are involved with the court system following parental separation or who are required to give evidence in criminal court are also particularly vulnerable.

Annex D of KCSIE notes that there are additional requirements for boarding schools. Children in residential settings can be particularly vulnerable and staff should be alert to pupil relationships and the potential for peer abuse. Boarding housemistresses work very closely with all teaching staff to ensure continuity of care and an overview of the whole child. The DSL, or one of her deputies, is always on call out of normal school hours during term time for any safeguarding concerns pertaining to a boarder.

All staff should be aware that children going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware that if a child is missing education for 10 consecutive days, the School is obliged to notify the local authority (Surrey).

In order to support pupils, both day and boarding, the School will:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are adults in the School whom they can approach if they are worried
- provide clear contact details of both the School's Independent Listener, Childline and the Children's Rights Director.
- include opportunities in the Life Matters (PHSE, Senior School and PSHE Prep School) and PSED (EYFS) curricula for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, including online. (See also ICT Policy – Guidelines for the Use of Digital Technology.)
- The School will ensure that all parents, staff and visitors are aware of restrictions on the use of mobile phones and personal portable devices such as cameras in EYFS. In our EYFS setting, mobile devices and cameras are not permitted in teaching areas. All images of children are stored on the school's server. Additional guidance on the use of mobile devices elsewhere in the School is made clear to all staff in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Pupils should be aware of the need to report allegations or suspicions of child abuse to a member of staff, who would then be responsible for passing the information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Senior pupils with positions of responsibility are made aware of their particular responsibility during their own tailored Child Protection training.

Pupils will be taught to recognise that abuse can take place wholly online or that technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

The School will endeavour to support the pupil through an instance of abuse by means of:

- the content of the curriculum
- the School ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- the School's Rewards and Sanctions Policy (Senior School) and Discipline, Rewards and Awards Policy (Prep School). The School will ensure that the pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable, but also know that they are valued and would not be blamed for any abuse which has occurred to them. Reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment will require clear and quick professional decisions to be made. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis, with the DSL taking a lead role, using her professional judgment and supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required. Clear guidelines are set out in the IT Policy – Guidelines for the Use of Digital Technology and pupils, staff and parents are asked to read and sign an agreement. This includes information about cyber bullying, internet safety and appropriate use of technology.
- liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, education welfare services and education psychology services.
- ensuring that, where a pupil who is the subject of a child protection plan leaves, her information is transferred to the new School immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The staff designated to take specific responsibility for Child Protection matters are known as the School's DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads). The lead DSL for the School is Deputy Head (Staff), Mrs Wendy Gibbs. Mrs Gibbs is a member of the Combined Senior Management Team, which comprises the SMT from both Prep and Senior Schools. The deputy DSLs are: in the Senior School, the Senior Housemistress, Mrs Kirsty Meredith and the Head of Sixth Form Boarding, Mrs Vic Alexander and in the Preparatory School, the Deputy Head (Pre-Prep), Miss Emily Jefford. All DSLs are experienced pastoral senior leaders. **They undertake Surrey County Council's Children's Services, Child Protection and Interagency Working training every two years. The DSL and her deputies are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.**

Mrs Wendy Gibbs as the Lead DSL is responsible for the arrangement of twice-termly DSL meeting for the sharing of updates, good practice and discussion of safeguarding matters. She would also convene the group urgently for any specific safeguarding need.

A member of the Governors' Pastoral Committee monitors and reports annually to the Governing Body on child protection issues, policies and procedures and the efficiency with which the related duties are discharged. This is currently Mrs C S Johnstone, MRCS LRCP, MBBS London, MD, FRCP.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- being fully conversant with Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedure Manual
- holding and being fully conversant with the School's copies of:
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (DfE 2018)*
 - KCSIE (September 2019) Keeping Children Safe in Education*
 - What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)*

- Briefing staff on the relevant contents of the above guidance and procedures, and on the procedures the School should follow including:
 - (i) briefing new staff including temporary employees, Governors and volunteers on Child Protection Policy and procedures as part of their induction programme after arrival at the school and ensuring they have read and understood: Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct for Staff and KCSIE (Part 1 and annex A)
 - (ii) ensuring new staff, including temporary employees, Governors and volunteers complete CHANNEL general awareness online training which includes 'CHANNEL' and 'PREVENT'.
 - (iii) **maintaining a programme of regular training in child protection matters, for all staff, Governors and all volunteers (the frequency of which is advised by Surrey Safeguarding Children Board)** notifying all staff that attendance at such training is mandatory and keeping their records of such training. Staff are also kept abreast of all safeguarding matters and updates during regular staff meetings. **All** staff are required to read KCSIE Part 1 and all school leaders and those who work directly with children should also read annex A.
 - (iv) ensuring that the school has up to date assessment information including for example the most up to date care plan for any pupil being looked after by the local authority
 - (v) briefing senior pupils who are given responsibility over other pupils (e.g. House Captains and Senior Boarders in the Senior School or any Senior pupils assisting with Cat Club or other activities in the Prep School) on appropriate action should they receive allegations of abuse
 - (vi) keeping under review the Action if a Pupil is Missing Senior School/Prep School Policy, which is known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and if necessary reporting, any student, day girl or 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. The School keeps more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. The local authority is informed if a pupil leaves the school at a nonstandard transition point or when a child is removed from the school roll.
 - (vii) ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the School and staff for child protection by including this policy on the School website
 - (viii) keeping written records of concerns about children, through minutes of meetings (Student/Parent Discussion forms (SPDs) in the Senior School, Teacher/Parent consultation forms (pink forms) in the Prep School – notes of conversations with pupils and parents even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Such notes must be signed and dated by the member of staff
 - (ix) ensuring all records of referrals are kept secure and in locked locations developing and then following procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
 - (x) ensuring safe recruitment practices are always followed (see Staff Recruitment Policy)
 - (xi) **on receiving reports of alleged or suspected child abuse including concerns about a child who may be drawn into terrorism** either within the School, or reported by a pupil relating to incidents at home or outside the School, **the DSL should contact the SSCB within twenty-four hours. This includes obtaining advice about borderline cases.**

Surrey Children's Services Tel: 0300 470 9100, or out of office hours urgent referrals can be made to the Emergency Duty Team Tel: 01483 517898.
 In a situation of immediate concern about a child's safety, call the Police on 999.

- (xi) notifying SSCP if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan
 - (xii) developing effective links with relevant agencies to co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences
 - (xiii) ensuring all contacts with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) are recorded and dated in a bound record book.
 - xiv) make a report to the Charity Commission that contact has been made with the LADO.
- Sharing concerns immediately with fellow DSL when they involve pupils with siblings across phases of the School
 - Meeting each term to review and evaluate any current girls of concern
 - Undertaking regular review of safeguarding policy and procedure in line with the most recent updates or DSL training.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership as required
- Support staff who make referrals to SSCP
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the DBS as required
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required
- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- Liaise with the headmistresses to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- Liaise with case manager and the designated officer at SSCP in cases which concern a staff member
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding including online and digital safety
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff

2. The School's Senior Medical Sister should hold a copy of "Child Protection: guidance for senior nurses, health visitors and midwives" DoH 1997 and should be fully conversant with, and use, its guidance when relevant to the School setting.

Important Note

Child abuse to be reported includes abuse of a pupil by a staff member or other adult, abuse at home which a pupil reports to staff, abuse by a stranger outside School, and abuse of one pupil by another pupil. In the case of abuse by a pupil, or group of pupils, the key issues identifying the problem as abuse (rather than an isolated instance of bullying or 'adolescent experimentation', which might be considered within normal bounds in the School community) are:

- the frequency, nature and severity of the incident(s)
- whether the victim was coerced by physical force, fear, or by a pupil or group of pupils significantly older than her, or having power or authority over her,
- whether the incident involved a potential criminal act, and whether if the same incident (or injury) had occurred to a member of staff or other adult, it would have been regarded as assault or otherwise actionable.

- abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil when there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’ will be referred to local agencies. In these circumstances it would be an expectation that all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, will be treated as being ‘at risk’. Victims and perpetrators and any other child affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported – as with any other safeguarding concern – by the pastoral team, including medical staff, school counsellors and the resident psychologist as appropriate.

3. Reporting concerns about child abuse:

What should you do if a pupil discloses an allegation of physical or sexual abuse to you?

Staff members and volunteers and other adults at the School should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should however guarantee:

- that they will **only** pass on information to the **minimum** number of people who **must** be told, in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort the problem out.
- that they will never tell anyone who does not have a clear ‘need to know’.
- that they will personally take whatever reasonable steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure of alleged abuse has been made.

Staff and volunteers should:

- Limit any questioning to the minimum necessary to seek clarification only.
- Avoid misleading the pupil or adult who has approached him/her by making suggestions or asking questions that introduce his/her own ideas about what may have happened. (Do not ask questions like “Did he/she do x to you?” using instead a minimum number of questions of the “Tell me what has happened” type.).
- Stop asking any more questions as soon as the pupil or adult has disclosed that he/she believes that something abusive has happened to him/her or to someone else.
- Tell the informing pupil or adult that they will now make sure that the appropriate people are brought in to follow up the problem.
- Ask the informing pupil or adult what steps he/she would like taken to protect him/her now that he/she has made an allegation and assure him/her that the School will try to follow his/her wishes.
- Check immediately whether or not the pupil has any siblings in either school and cross reference to the DSL accordingly in case a whole family situation is being discovered.
- Make a **handwritten, signed and dated** record as soon as possible **on the same day** of what he/she has been told and make a copy of this available to either the relevant Headmistress and DSLs or Chair of Governors and LADO as appropriate. **It is vital to use the exact words of the pupil wherever possible.**

NB School staff, including the Headmistresses and volunteers, should **not** investigate reports of physical or sexual abuse themselves. Alleged victims, perpetrators, those reporting abuse and any others involved must **not** be interviewed by School staff beyond the point at which it is clear that there is an allegation of abuse. The interviewing of children and adults involved is carried out by specially trained Children’s Services and/or police staff following agreed procedures.

What to do if you have reason to suspect that abuse has taken place in school, or that a school pupil may have been abused outside school (Contextual Safeguarding).

- It is vital that staff and volunteers report the information to a DSL immediately when they receive the information, leaving a class with a cover teacher if necessary, and that any written accounts of the conversations had are also passed to the DSL. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or deputy DSLs cannot be contacted, staff should contact a member of the Combined SMT.
- If there is concern of serious harm to a pupil it should be made known to the police from the outset. Referrals will also be made to the police for any child at risk of harm if the School believes a crime may have been committed.
- The DSL will then follow the procedure set out in section 5.
- Any boarder who is either accused of abuse or alleges to be a victim of it will be accommodated in the school Medical Centre and will receive appropriate support and supervision. If a teacher has discovered that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out ~~is suspected~~, then this **must** be referred to the Police by the staff member to whom the information has been disclosed, even if they have reported it to the DSL, as there is a statutory duty to do so. This duty does not apply in 'at risk' or suspected cases and staff members should follow School safeguarding procedures.

4. What to do if you have reason to believe or suspect a member of staff or a volunteer to have committed abuse in school, or to a school pupil either at home or outside school.

- If the concern is about a member of staff or volunteer, or is centred on the DSL, it should be reported to either the Headmistress of the Prep School or the Headmistress of the Senior School as appropriate who should be kept informed. If both of the Headmistresses are absent, the allegation should be passed to the Chairman of Governors, Mr Peter Martin c/o St Catherine's School.
- If the allegation is about either of the Headmistresses, the report should be made to the Chairman of Governors, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership without the Headmistress being informed. Advice and guidance is available through the SSCP.

Contact details: 0300 123 1650 (option 3): ask to speak to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations OR access the SSCP Surrey Child Protection Procedure Manual from the SSCP <http://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>

- All allegations of abuse against teachers or other staff must be reported within one working day to the LADO or, in the most serious cases, to the police. In borderline cases informal discussions with the LADO can be made without naming the school or individual. A referral (or informal discussion) can be made to the SSCP by any member of staff or volunteer if necessary. All discussions must be recorded in writing
- **No** investigations will take place without prior consultation with the LADO or the police.
- Any member of staff living on site, after such an allegation has been made, will be immediately relocated at the school's expense to other suitable accommodation away from the school site.
- Any allegations of serious harm or abuse committed by any person living, working, or looking after children at the school (whether the allegations refer to acts committed on the premises or elsewhere) must be reported to Ofsted. We should also report to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable and certainly within 14 days of the allegation being made, any actions taken in response to the allegations.
- The School will report to the DBS any person employed, contracted (including supply teachers), a volunteer or student teacher or other trainee whose services are no longer used because

he/she is considered to be unsuitable to work with children or who would have been dismissed from School if they had not left earlier.

- The school is required to restrict the reporting and publishing of allegations against teachers until such a time as the accused person is charged with an offence or the DfE/TRA (Teaching Regulation Agency) publish information about an investigation.
- The quick resolution of the allegation must be a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned.
- Procedures as stated in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2019) Part 4 will be followed.

Important Note

One of the major reasons for the inclusion of boarding Schools within the Children Act 1989 was to ensure that local child protection procedures are followed in cases of alleged child abuse. These procedures require that, to minimise the risk of problems that have occurred in the investigation of abuse elsewhere in the country, the interviewing of children and adults involved is now carried out by specially trained staff only. This follows procedures agreed between (amongst others) the local authority and police, in line with government requirements and in the light of the recommendations of past inquiries. These are designed to avoid unnecessary or repeated interviewing and examinations, to involve the police and medical personnel as appropriate and, in the light of the experience of previous investigations, to avoid the 'cross contamination' of evidence that may later be needed in court by interviews that may have 'led' a witness. Similarly, boarding inspectors will not interview or investigate allegations of child abuse themselves. They, too, will refer the investigation to specialist Children's Services and police staff.

It is important to acknowledge that the Children Act will inevitably lead to some investigations being triggered which do not substantiate the allegation made, as well as those that do. It is a basic assumption that it is better to endure some 'false alarms', than to fail to initiate specialist investigation of instances of real abuse. The Local Authority Designated Officer will work with the Head, staff and pupils involved in any 'false alarm' investigation to assist in recovery from the incident, as well as working with the School to assist in 'living through' and recovering from a substantiated investigation.

5. The relevant DSL on receiving an allegation of physical or sexual abuse should:

(Note: All discussions must be recorded in writing)

- a) Take any steps needed to protect any pupil involved from risk of immediate harm.

Important Note

This may involve allocating an appropriate member of staff, as far as possible a person chosen by the pupil herself, to stay with her. Similarly, an inspector receiving an allegation of abuse at the School may stay with the pupil concerned until suitable arrangements for her protection are made.

- b) **Not** interview or investigate the allegation further, but refer the matter **within 24 hours** to the LADO at the Surrey Contact Centre. The DSL at the School should speak personally to the Surrey Contact Centre, and not rely on leaving a message. When DSLs are uncertain about whether a formal referral is necessary they should contact the LADO to seek guidance explaining the situation and refer to "Early Help Multi-agency levels of need guidance" within the Surrey Child Protection Procedure Manual (SSCP). Once it has been agreed that a formal referral is necessary, this should be confirmed in writing as soon as possible.

- c) Consult the Surrey Child Protection Team Manager and follow his/her advice about contacting parents, other staff, police, doctor, alleged perpetrator or witness direct.
- d) Agree with the Child Protection Team Manager any necessary steps in relation to:
- informing a pupil's parents (Parental consent is not required when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm).
 - medical examination or treatment for the pupil (again, there are circumstances where medical evidence will be needed).
 - immediate protection that may be needed for a pupil who has been the victim of abuse, a pupil who has given information about abuse, and a pupil against whom an allegation has been made (each of these may now be at risk).
 - informing other people at the School (including any other members of staff) of the allegation and its investigation (experience has shown that knowledge of an allegation or impending investigation can lead to a serious risk to the informant from the alleged perpetrator, or to 'cover up' evidence that may be sought by police - such as collections of child pornographic photographs - or to pressure being applied on others to remain silent).
 - informing the placing authority, if there is one.
- e) Inform the pupil or adult who made the initial allegation of what the next steps are to be, having agreed these with the local Child Protection Team Manager (*It is helpful for the call to the Child Protection Team Manager to be made while the pupil or adult is waiting, so that he or she can be told the likely next steps immediately after the call*).
- f) If necessary, after consultation with the DfE Guidance in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2019) and Surrey Child Protection Procedure Manual consider the suspension from duty, pending investigation, of any staff member who is alleged to have abused a pupil or pupils.
- g) Take any necessary steps for the longer-term protection and support of each pupil who has made allegations of abuse, or is alleged to have suffered from abuse, taking her wishes fully into account. *This may involve the pupil receiving continuing support and protection from a staff member chosen by herself. In the case of a day girl this may involve coming into boarding; in the case of a boarder it may involve changing accommodation within boarding, or returning to her parents temporarily.*
- h) Take any necessary steps to protect and support a pupil who is alleged to have abused another. *The allegation may not later be substantiated, but even if it is, the School continues to have a statutory welfare responsibility towards this pupil while she is at the School.* The age and developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator should be considered and it should also be recognised that she may have unmet needs. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- i) Ensure that any pupil being interviewed by the police has available a supportive member of staff of her own choice to accompany her if this becomes necessary.
- j) Notify the DBS of any allegation against a member of staff who is being investigated by the local Children's Services Department and/or Police.

- k) Ensure co-operation by the School in any subsequent investigation.
- l) Make arrangements where feasible for any pupil who has been the subject of abuse to receive any necessary continuing counselling and support by agreement with her parent(s) where appropriate.
- m) Each pupil placed on the Child Protection Register must have her own multi agency Child Protection Plan, which must be agreed during the Initial Child Protection Conference. Membership of the Core Group will be identified at the Initial Child Protection Conference and will include the parents/carers, child, other relevant family members and relevant professionals. A key worker will be appointed to co-ordinate and lead the core group which is responsible for developing all aspects of the multi-agency Child Protection Plan.

As always, when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, schools and colleges should follow general safeguarding principles. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).

Children who have suffered or are at risk of suffering significant harm should be reported to Surrey Safeguarding Children Board immediately. Those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies should lead to inter-agency assessment using local processes, including use of **Early Help Assessment** (previously Common Assessment Framework) and **Team around the Child approaches**. The Harm test is explained on the DBS website Gov.uk <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#what-is-the-harm-test>

Contact with the SSCP will initiate an independent investigation if this proves to be necessary, and the Local Authority Designated Officer will arrange, within pre-set time limits, the involvement of the relevant specialist police personnel and if necessary a meeting of the agencies who may need to be involved, together with the School.

The School should consider taking, and, as necessary should take, disciplinary action against any member of staff or agent of the School, where it believes pupils are at risk of abuse from that member of staff, even in cases where there is to be no criminal prosecution.

Advice and guidance are available through the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board. All discussions must be recorded in writing.

(Contact details: 0300 123 1650 (option 3): ask to speak to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations OR access the SSCP Surrey Child Protection Procedure Manual from the SSCB <http://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>

Important Note:

The School must make its own decision on whether a pupil's welfare is at risk, whatever the outcome of a police or children's services investigation may be, and the level of evidence needed for criminal prosecution is likely to be higher than that which may trigger valid disciplinary proceedings. Disciplinary proceedings and grounds for concern over pupils' welfare may be based on 'balance of probability' rather than 'beyond reasonable doubt'.

Where a member of the boarding, residential staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, the School will immediately provide alternative accommodation away from the boarding pupils.

Where a School has 'low level' concerns that do not amount to allegations or suspicions of specific abuse, but which may indicate the possibility of abuse occurring, the relevant DSL should discuss these with the SSCP.

6. Ensure Staff and volunteers are aware of the professional boundaries and obligations

As part of the training for all staff and volunteers in child protection, the School issues guidelines to **all** staff and volunteers on the prevention of abuse, including cyberbullying, which are covered in the school's Code of Conduct for staff, the Whistle Blowing policy and the ICT Policy – Guidelines for the use of Digital Technology. This includes issues such as:

- staff supervision of high-risk situations (e.g. 1:1 tuition, sports coaching, individual music tuition, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil including use of social media).
- avoidance of inappropriate physical contact between staff and pupils.
- avoidance of inappropriately spending time alone with individual pupils.
- the need for all staff to be vigilant in spotting and reporting clear suspicions that abuse may be occurring, including online, and a duty to report concerns about the management of safeguarding; concern about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime.
- providing immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against such staff for 'whistle blowing' direct to the relevant public authorities/social care with a concern about possible abuse
- advice to staff on maintaining professional boundaries online and the correct protocol for pupil and parent contact.

All staff and volunteers are required to follow the Staff Code of Conduct, which includes a clear statement that corporal punishment is prohibited. The Code also provides guidance on the proper use of physical contact in extreme situations where it becomes necessary to safeguard a pupil or a member of staff.

The School must report to the DBS and, in the case of teaching staff, must consider reporting to the TRA within one month of his/her leaving the School, any person – employed, contracted (including supply teachers provided by an employment agency), a volunteer or student teacher or other trainee – whose services are no longer used because s/he is considered unsuitable to work with children. For guidance regarding whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to be reported reference should be made to TRA guidance on the website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teacher-misconduct-referring-a-case> and Teacher Misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (July 2014) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-the-prohibition-of-teachers--3>

DBS Contact details DBS helpline 03000 200 190 Email:- customerservices@db.s.gsi.gov.uk

TRA Contact details
Telephone for referrals: 020 7593 5393
Email:- misconduct.teacher@education.gsi.gov.uk

Governors

- All governors read and agree to the Child Protection Policy. Any proposed reviews or amendments to the policy are sent to all governors on an annual basis or more frequently when necessary.
- The Governor with responsibility for Child Protection and the Chairman of the Governors are contacted by the DSL whenever they are dealing with a child protection case. Any Child Protection issues are raised with the Chair of Governors at the regular meetings with Headmistresses.
- Child Protection cases are also raised at the Governors Pastoral Committee, which comprises Governors, including the Governor with responsibility for Child Protection (Mrs Clare Johnstone), the Headmistresses of both Senior and Prep schools, selected members of SMT with pastoral roles or particular skills and the Senior Nursing Sister. This committee meets twice yearly. At one of these meetings a CP audit for the year is presented, and a review of the Health and Safety measures for pastoral areas of the school is undertaken (this includes reviewing the procedures in relation to Child Protection.) The audit is subsequently signed by the CP governor and presented at the next available Governing Body Meeting.
- Safeguarding is taken as a separate item on each Governing Body Meeting Agenda each term.
- The governor with specific overview for online safety (the responsibility of which lies with the DSL) is Dr Michael Jordan.

The School will remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements that become apparent working in liaison with the LADO when appropriate.

CONTACT DETAILS

SCHOOL

Chair of Governors

Mr Peter Martin c/o St. Catherine's School Tel: 01483 893363

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Lead DSL: Mrs Wendy Gibbs (Deputy Head, Staff) and member of the Combined Senior Management Team)

Prep School (including EYFS)

Mrs Wendy Gibbs (lead DSL): wendy.gibbs@stcatherines.info, Tel: 01483 899745

Miss Emily Jefford: emily.jefford@stcatherines.info, Tel:01483 899667

Senior School

Mrs Kirsty Meredith: kirsty.meredith@stcatherines.info, Tel: 01483 899604

Mrs Vic Alexander: vic.alexander@stcatherines.info, Tel: 01483 899642

LOCAL

Local Area contact details for Schools and Early Years Child Protection Consultation Line: 0300 123 1640 (South West area) or 0300 123 1650 (option 3) to speak directly to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff or volunteers. All allegations of abuse against teachers or other staff must be reported within one working day to the LADO or, in the most serious cases, to the police.

SSCP Surrey Child Protection Procedure Manual can be found here:

<http://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>

Contact Surrey Children's Single Point of Access (SPA) Tel: 0300 470 9100 or out of office hours urgent referrals can be made to the Emergency Duty Team Tel: 01483 517898.

In a situation of immediate concern about a child's safety call the **Police** on 999.

Local Police Waverley Neighbourhood Police Station, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR
Phone 101

General safeguarding advice for schools in Surrey can be obtained from SSCP Support Team 01372 833330 sscb@surrey.gov.uk

If you become aware that the Police have been involved with a child, young person or family, please contact Surrey Children's Services on 01483 518505 or csmash@surreycc.gov.uk or Secure Email csmash@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk.

OTHER

NSPCC (0808 028 0285 – 8am – 8pm Monday – Friday; or email help@nspcc.org.uk)

The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (**020 7340 7264**) to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to **extremism** directly. Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.

DBS Contact details

DBS helpline 03000 200 190

Email: customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk

TRA Contact details

Telephone for referrals: 020 7593 5393

Email:- misconduct.teacher@education.gsi.gov.uk

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 (September 2019)
- Appendix 2 Glossary
- Appendix 3 COVID – 19: Safeguarding

.....
 Mrs A M Phillips
 Headmistress

.....
 Miss N Bartholomew
 Headmistress of Preparatory School

Date:

This policy will be reviewed annually or more regularly if required by regulatory change. The DSLs, Senior Management Team and Designated Child Protection Governor will be involved in this review which is then followed by scrutiny and approval by the full Governing Body.