

## S. ANSELM'S SCHOOL

# CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD ABUSE POLICY

## 'A GUIDE FOR THE STAFF'

Date Implemented: July 1993



<b>Monitoring :</b>	HEADMASTER
<b>Named Person Responsible :</b>	<b>Child Protection Officer:</b> S. C. Northcott (Headmaster) <b>CPO Deputy:</b> Cara Hill
<b>Designated Teacher :</b>	P.J Berry (Deputy Head)
<b>Designated Governor :</b>	N. Weston (Chair)
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<b>See also :</b>	S. Anselm's Anti-Bullying Policy Boarding Policy How to raise a concern (whistle-blowing) Policy S. Anselm's Complaints Procedure

## **CHILD PROTECTION and ABUSE POLICY**

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## **CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD ABUSE:**

### **A GUIDE FOR STAFF**

Under the terms of The Children Act 1989 all staff must be aware of the procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse about children attending the school made within, or outside the school. Abuse can be defined as being where a child has suffered 'significant harm' or impairment of health and development by reason of physical violence, sexual interference, emotional pressure, neglect or financial abuse.

#### **Definitions of Abuse**

To understand and identify significant harm, it is necessary to consider:

- the nature of harm, in terms of maltreatment or failure to provide adequate care
- the impact on the child's health and development
- the child's development within the context of their family and wider environment
- any special needs, such as a medical condition, communication impairment or disability,
- that may affect the child's development and care within the family
- the capacity of parents to meet adequately the child's needs
- the wider and environmental family context.

The child's reactions, his or her perceptions, and wishes and feelings should be ascertained and taken account of according to the child's age and understanding. To do this depends on communicating effectively with children and young people, including those who find it difficult to do so because of their age, impairment, or their particular psychological or social situation. It is essential that any accounts of adverse experiences coming from children are as accurate and complete as possible. 'Accuracy is key, for without it effective decisions cannot be made and, equally, inaccurate accounts can lead to children remaining unsafe or to the possibility of wrongful actions being taken that affect children and adults.'

#### **What is abuse and neglect?**

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.

#### **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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

## **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **Neglect**

Neglect 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.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Refer also to the S. Anselm's Anti-Bullying Policy).

Please familiarise your self with the text. In the event that one of us **does** receive such information, it is vital **and a legal requirement** that it is dealt with as here described.

Anyone, who wishes to read the Derbyshire DSCB Procedures Manual, may borrow it from the Deputy Head or The Children Act 1989 from the Headmaster. Derbyshire DSCB procedure manuals and copies of this policy are in all the boarding houses.

Mr. Northcott is the person with responsibility for child protection issues in the school. Mrs Cara Hill is the person that you should contact if Mr Northcott is away or if you suspect him of anything. In the text that follows, all references to the designated person should be read as referring to him. In the case of both of these persons being absent, any allegation should be referred to the Deputy Head.

Any member of staff who is told of any incident or has a suspicion of child abuse occurring in the school, or to a pupil of the school at home or outside the school (or who him or herself knows of or suspects such abuse), must report the information immediately to the person responsible. (In the absence of the Headmaster, the immediate report should be made to the designated member of staff, The Deputy Head). (If the allegation or suspicion is about the Headmaster or Deputy Head, the report should be made to one of the independent listeners:

### **Contact Numbers**

- Childline: Tel: 0800 1111; Freepost, London 1111, N1 0BR
- Richard Carter: the Beeches, Main St. Great Longstone, Derbyshire DE45 1TF  
Tel: (M) 0790 098 0967
- Kevin Stolz: 3 Springfield Villas, Church Road, Darley Dale, Derbyshire DE4 2GG  
Tel: (M) 07969 969157
- Mrs Cathy Colhoun: Tel: 01629 814695

- Children’s Social Care, Buxton: Tel: 01629 531025
- Call Derbyshire (out of hours): Tel: 08456 058058
- General Police: Tel: 0845 1233333
- Ofsted Tel: 08456 404040

## Useful Websites

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

[www.derbyshirescb.org.uk/procedures](http://www.derbyshirescb.org.uk/procedures)

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)

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 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 him or herself, or having power or authority over him or her,

whether the incident involved a potentially 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.

School staff (including the Headmaster and the Deputy Head) should not investigate reports of physical or sexual abuse themselves. Alleged victims, perpetrators, those reporting abuse and others involved should **not** be interviewed by school staff beyond the point at which it is clear that there is an allegation of abuse.

One of the major reasons for the inclusion of boarding schools within the Children Act was to ensure the local child protection procedures are followed in cases of alleged child abuse, and these 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, following 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 into the handling of child abuse issues.

These are designed to avoid unnecessary or repeated interviewing and examinations, to involve the police and medical examinations as appropriate and in the light of the experience of previous investigations, and to avoid the ‘contamination’ of evidence that may later be needed in court by interviews that may have ‘led’ a witness. Similarly, Ofsted may choose not to interview or investigate allegations of child abuse themselves – they too will refer the investigation to Derbyshire DSCB and police staff.

It is important to acknowledge that the Children Act 1989 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 OFSTED Inspector may choose to 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.

Staff members, and other adults at the school, should **never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils** or adults wishing to tell them 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’, and that they will personally take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure of alleged abuse has been made.

**Any staff member to whom an allegation of abuse is made should:**

1. Limit any questioning to the minimum necessary to seek clarification only, strictly avoiding ‘leading’ the pupil or adult who has approached them by making suggestions or asking questions that introduce their own ideas about what may have happened. (Do not ask questions like “Did he do x to you?”, using instead a minimum number of questions of the “Tell me what has happened” type).
2. Stop asking any more questions as soon as the pupil or adult has disclosed that he or she believes that something abusive has happened to him or her, or to someone else.
3. Tell the informing pupil or adult that the staff member will now make sure that the appropriate people are brought in to follow the problem up (these will include the specialist social worker, and that worker may need to involve the police).
4. Ask the informing pupil or adult what steps they would like taken to protect them now that they have made an allegation, and assure them the school will try to follow their wishes.
5. Refer the matter immediately with all relevant details (including Form 1 ‘Notice of Concern’) to the persons responsible who should then seek advice from the Children's Social Care at Buxton Tel: 01629 531025
6. Make a written record as soon as possible of what they have been told, and make a copy of this available to the person responsible. Keep your original notes however scruffy.
7. Make a verbal notification to the Ofsted within 24 hours of a disclosure (Telephone number: 01332 851800), confirmed in writing at the earliest possible opportunity (Fax number: 01332 851810).

**Persons to be notified**

After the person responsible has received an allegation of abuse, they will need to co-ordinate various courses of action. The head CPO and his deputy will convene and discuss the matter. If it is thought to be a Child protection issue he will NOT investigate the matter further, but will contact the Childrens Social Care (see telephone number above). If this happens out of hours then the person responsible will contact the Emergency Duty Team (Telephone number: 0845 6058058). It may be necessary to allocate another staff member to stay with the child (preferably a teacher of the child's own choice). As soon as possible after an allegation is made, the person responsible should inform the parent(s) or carer(s) of the child/ren involved. If the allegation is against a member of staff the local authority

designated officer (LADO) should be consulted before this action is taken (the person responsible will also complete Form 2 'Action following a disclosure' which will then be passed to the LADO) to ensure that this does not impede the disciplinary or investigative processes. In some circumstances, however, the parent(s)/carer(s) may need to be told straight away e.g. if a child is injured and requires medical treatment.

The parent(s)/carer(s) and the child, if sufficiently mature, should be helped to understand the processes involved and kept informed about the progress of the case and of the outcome. This will include the outcome of any disciplinary process, but not the deliberations of, or the information used in, a hearing.

The DCFS document 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' is available in the Deputy Head's Office and should be referred to at this juncture.

**NO ONE WILL CONTACT** parents or other staff, the police, the alleged perpetrator or witnesses before consultation with Children's Social Care. The person responsible will be advised by Children's Social Care as to whether (a) parents should be told (there are clearly circumstances where this would be inappropriate) or (b) any medical treatment or examination is necessary (again, this would be contra-indicated in some situations). Further advice will be taken as to whether the child should be isolated, or any other staff be informed. Experience has shown that once an investigation is under way, there is the possibility of perpetrators being 'warned' and pressure applied to potential witnesses. **IT MAY BE**, therefore, that if YOU have to report an incident, you will hear nothing further for some considerable time, since specialist social workers/police will deal with it.

In any subsequent interview involving the child, you, or a staff member of the child's choice, may be required to accompany the child as an 'Appropriate Adult'.

Where any staff member has what may be described as 'low level' concerns, which do not amount to suspicion of abuse, **BUT WHERE THERE IS A CHANCE** that such abuse **MAY** occur, then the designated staff member will discuss these with the CSC Inspector. Similarly, the Inspector may voice such concerns following a visit to the school, and may wish to discuss child protection issues with the staff.

### **Additional Guidance**

All staff should be aware of risk situations for themselves. In particular, it is not advisable for staff to spend time on a one-to-one basis with a pupil, where it might give rise to allegations. Inappropriate physical contact should be avoided with pupils of either sex. This does **NOT** mean that there must never be **ANY** physical contact. Clearly, since we are in loco parentis, to put one's arm around a child in distress may be an appropriate and right thing to do! S. Anselm's rightly prides itself on the relaxed relationships between staff and pupils. Nevertheless, staff should be aware that some distance should always be preserved.

(It is a requirement of The Children Act 1989 that such a reminder be given to staff).

### **One to One situations with Pupils**

Whenever possible staff should ensure that they do not spend time in one to one situations with children. That said, the very nature of the job, as both teacher and carer, means that these situations will arise on more than an infrequent basis. During these situations the member of staff should try to ensure that:

- They ideally do not locate themselves in a room without windows
- The door to the room is (whenever possible) left ajar
- They do not position themselves between the pupil and the door
- They let another member of staff/adult know that they are seeing the child in the room and inform the child of this fact

## **Physical Contact**

Physical contact between staff and pupils should be avoided whenever possible. That said, the very nature of the job (teachers in loco parentis and houseparents/nurses/carers) will mean that situations will arise when comfort is required by a child. During these situations the member of staff must ensure that:

- Physical contact is kept to a minimum and in no way could be interpreted as of a sexual or intimidating nature
- That the contact does not really take place on a one to one basis (see notes on One to One contact)

## **Travelling in Minibuses/cars**

Members of staff are reminded that they are in loco parentis and, as such, must drive with due caution and care. This care extends to ensuring that safety is paramount when boarding and alighting. Whilst it is very often the case that a single member of staff will drive a minibus (and that this is perfectly acceptable), staff are reminded that minibuses and cars represent the same enclosed area as a classroom and that the guidelines on Physical Contact and One to One situations apply as readily here as in any other situation. Ideally try and seat any children in the back seats of your car to avoid any accusations.

## **How to raise a concern (Whistle blowing)**

We very much appreciate that we cannot expect the children to report incidents if we, ourselves, do not. There is, therefore, a 'whistle blowing' policy in place which outlines the way in which a concern should be raised and the actions that should be taken should such an event occur. Please refer to the 'How to raise a Concern (Whistle blowing) Policy' for further information.

## **Recruitment**

See S. Anselm's Recruitment Policy.

A copy of the DSCB Safeguarding Procedures is available in the Deputy Head's Office. It is designed to be accessed electronically as it contains internal and external hyperlinks and can be found at [www.derbyshirescb.org.uk](http://www.derbyshirescb.org.uk)

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## MAKING A COMPLAINT (Children)

Sometimes you may feel that you would like to complain about something that is worrying you. This might be about how you are being treated. The first thing you should do is speak to any member of staff you trust (like your Housemaster, Housemistress, a Matron, Form Teacher, Teacher, Deputy Head or the Headmaster); you can take a friend or person you trust with you if you wish – another child, an older child or another member of staff.

Sometimes a friendly chat may not be enough and you may wish to make a formal written complaint. This is what you do:

Go and see any teacher or matron or other adult and tell him or her your problem. The adult you have chosen will listen to you sympathetically and help you talk things through. You will be helped to write down the details which will then need to be given to your Headmaster.

You will then be asked to talk the matter through with either the Headmaster (or Deputy Head) – that is, if you have not approached him in the first place – and you can have a friend with you, who may be another child or an adult. If, within two more days, you have not had the matter satisfactorily sorted out, you may contact any of the people whose details are listed below. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO INFORM STAFF OR ANYONE ELSE THAT YOU ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THEM.**

### PEOPLE OUTSIDE SCHOOL YOU MAY WISH TO CONTACT:

- **Your parents or another relative or respected friend.**
- Richard Carter: the Beeches, Main St. Great Longstone, Derbyshire DE45 1TF  
Tel: (M) 0790 098 0967
- Childline: Tel: 0800 1111; Freepost, London 1111, N1 0BR
- Mrs Cathy Colhoun: Tel: 01629 814695
- Ofsted Tel: 08456 404040

These numbers are displayed on the notice board by the telephone.

Whoever you contact will speak to you at the school – again you can have a friend with you – and will advise you about what course seems sensible. At that stage it will be up to you to make a decision acting on his (her) advice.

**DON'T BE AFRAID TO COMPLAIN**

**IF EVER YOU WANT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT AND DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, ASK AN ADULT.**

# Worried? Want to complain? Need to speak to someone? Here's what to do...

1. You should speak to any member of staff you trust (like your Housemaster, Housemistress, a Matron, Form Teacher, Teacher, Deputy Head or the Headmaster); you can take a friend or person you trust with you if you wish – another child, an older child or another member of staff.

2. If you are still worried, go and see any teacher or matron or other adult and tell him or her, your problem. Take a friend if you need to. The adult you have chosen will listen to you sympathetically and help you talk things through. You will be helped to write down the details which will then need to be given to your Headmaster. If it is still not dealt with properly then go to one of the following people:

- **The School also has a counsellor, Mrs Hill, and you can talk to her quietly if you should wish.**
- **Your parents or another relative or respected friend.**
- Richard Carter: the Beeches, Main St. Great Longstone, Derbyshire DE45 1TF Tel: (M) 0790 098 0967
- Childline: Tel: 0800 1111; Freepost, London 1111, N1 0BR
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