



# Wimbledon College

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## Child Protection Policy

**Wimbledon College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This policy should be read in tandem with Wimbledon College’s E-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy, and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of:

1.1.1 Relevant legislation, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Education Act 2002, and the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010;

1.1.2 Relevant guidance issued by HM Government, including:

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

“Working Together to Safeguard Children” March 2015

“Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services”  
March 2015

“What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” March 2015  
“Keeping children safe in education” March 2015,  
“Searching, screening and confiscation” 2014  
The Sexual Offences Act 2003

- 1.1.3 Other relevant standards and guidance including guidance issued by the Independent Schools Inspectorate entitled: Handbook for the Inspection of Schools, The Regulatory Requirements (effective from September 2010), and as relevant to CLFS School the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (effective from September 2010); and
- 1.1.4 Relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures 2010.

## **2. Statement of Intent**

- 2.1. The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the School to identify, assess, and support those children where there are concerns about a child’s safety and welfare.
- 2.2 We recognise that all adults, including Staff and Governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting pupils from harm, and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern. Wherever the word “Staff” is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including temporary and support staff, and volunteers working with children. Staff are in a “position of trust”, and as such have special responsibilities, including those defined in The Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- 2.3 The School, through its Governors and Staff, is committed to providing a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

## **3. The aims of this policy are to:**

- 3.1 Support each child’s development in ways that will foster awareness, understanding, security, confidence, resilience and independence.
- 3.2 Provide an environment in which all children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and also feel confident to approach adults if they are in difficulties believing they will be effectively listened to.
- 3.3 Raise the awareness of all Staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- 3.4 provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the School, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- 3.5 Emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of Staff.

- 3.6 Develop a structured procedure within the School, which will be followed by all members of the School community in cases of alleged or suspected neglect, abuse and/or any other child welfare concern.
- 3.7 Develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Children Social Care.
- 3.8 Ensure that all adults within the School have been checked as to their suitability.
- 3.9 Should any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements become apparent, the arrangements will be remedied without delay.

#### **4. Procedures**

- 4.1 Our procedures for safeguarding children have been prepared in accordance with relevant legislation, guidance and the procedures set out by the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. We will ensure that:
  - 4.1.1 Arrangements are in place at to deal with allegations of abuse, or suspected abuse, which will be referred to the child's home social care department, and in the case of allegations of abuse on site, London Borough of Merton, Social care and the College will engage with other statutory agencies, as necessary, to provide inter-agency support to the child concerned.
  - 4.1.2 All members of the Governing Body understand and fulfill their responsibilities and are provided with a copy of this policy upon their appointment to the Governing Body. There is one nominated Governor who is responsible for child protection and who has skills commensurate for this role. Relevant training will be provided for Governors.
  - 4.1.3 We have a designated senior member of staff [**Michael Hartland**], the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who has undertaken relevant child protection training delivered through the local LSCB. The deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is **Pierre Cargill**.
  - 4.1.4 All members of Staff are provided with relevant Child Protection Awareness information, as provided by the Proprietor and/or Local Authority, to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, along with individual responsibilities to respond to any child welfare concerns in accordance with the school's child protection procedures. In particular all Staff understand the need to avoid asking leading questions of children when a child protection matter is brought to the Staff members' attention.
  - 4.1.5 All members of Staff and Governors are advised on how to respond to 'Disclosures of Abuse' through relevant training. In particular training will ensure that they understand the need to: consider measures that may be necessary to protect individual pupils; avoid asking leading questions of pupils; avoid giving inappropriate guarantees of confidentiality; make and keep written records; and report the matter to the DSL. All members of Staff and Governors can make a direct referral to outside agencies although routinely they should liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- 4.1.6 We will ensure that safe recruitment practices are always followed, through rigorous recruitment process and procedures for Staff, striking a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect Staff from false or unfounded allegations. Our selection and recruitment of staff includes checks for their suitability through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). These checks will also be carried out on Staff with a break in service of more than 3 months, or those that were not previously eligible for a Disclosure but have moved to work that involves significantly greater responsibility for children. In accordance with procedures adopted by the London Borough of Merton, CRB checks are also carried out on all new Governors at the School.
- 4.1.7 We will ensure that where a concern or allegation arises which suggests that a member of Staff may be unsuitable to work with children, we consult the relevant LADO for advice regarding investigation, and if the person resigns, we dismiss them, or in the case of a volunteer we cease to use their services and report them to ISA within one month.
- 4.1.8 All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the school's Child Protection Policy on the College website, and reference to it in our introductory material. The Policy is also available upon request to the School.
- 4.1.9 Written assurance is obtained 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.
- 4.2 Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on College sites at any time.
- 4.2.1 Community users organising activities for children are made aware of the College's child protection guidelines and procedures.
- 4.2.2 Where appropriate, senior pupils given positions of responsibility over other pupils will be given clear advice on their role and safe practice, and briefed on appropriate action to take should they observe or receive any allegations of abuse.
- 4.2.3 The name of the DSL will be clearly advertised in the College, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse and/or risk to a child.
- 4.2.4 All new members of Staff will receive, as part of their induction into the school, Safeguarding training. This will include the College's Child Protection Policy and the latest DfE guidance, including "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused". Copies of this booklet are available in all faculty offices, Head of Line Offices, PSA's offices and the College Secretary's office. Both documents are available electronically on the school's shared folder [H:\Documents Shared\Safeguarding] and the College's Policy is available on the school's website. All new staff are given instruction on how to access these documents.

- 4.2.5 Our procedures will be reviewed annually by the Board of Governors. The review will also include a review of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.
- 4.3.1 Any searching of pupils or confiscation of pupils' property should be carried out with due regard to appropriate DfE guidance
- 4.4.1 If a pupil appears to have "gone missing" (i.e. absent for at least two days and the school has been unable to ascertain a legitimate reason), then appropriate outside agencies will be informed

## **5. Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The DSL is responsible for:
  - 5.1.1 Referring a child to the LACSC whenever an allegation or disclosure of abuse has been made or if there are concerns about possible abuse, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. All referrals will be carried out in accordance with LSCB procedures.
  - 5.1.2 Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
  - 5.1.3 Request from the previous school of a new pupil joining Wimbledon College confirmation of nil Safeguarding concern or for the transfer of relevant safeguarding file to Wimbledon College.
  - 5.1.4 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and are kept separate from pupil records, and copied on separately from the main pupil file to the child's next school or college up to 18 years. The confidential file is accompanied by a letter requesting receipt of the file from the next school or college [when known].
  - 5.1.5 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records. The general file of a pupil who has been, or is, on a CP or CIN plan is coloured red.
  - 5.1.6 Liaising with other agencies and professionals and ensuring that contact with the relevant welfare agency will be made immediately upon the disclosure or suspicion of abuse. The referral shall be made in writing or with written confirmation of a telephone referral.
  - 5.1.7 Ensuring that he/she provides reports for, and attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, and otherwise co-operates with the LACSC and other agencies to support inter-agency working.
  - 5.1.8 Ensuring that any pupil currently subject to a child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to the allocated social worker.

- 5.1.9 Undertaking training in child protection, including training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards set by, the LSCB, and undertakes refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep his or her knowledge and skills up to date.
- 5.1.10 Organising child protection training for all school Staff and Governors and arranging refresher training for the Head Master and all other Staff at three yearly intervals.
- 5.2 Providing, with the Head Master, an annual report for the Board of Governors, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken the DSL, and by all Staff and Governors; the number and type of incidents/cases, and the number of children subject to a child protection plan (anonymised).
- 5.3 Maintaining an up-to-date list of pupils on CP, CIN or at risk indicating step-up or step-down since the last change.

## **6. Supporting Children**

- 6.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.
- 6.2 We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 6.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 6.4 The College will support all pupils by:
  - 6.4.1 Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst attempting to counteract aggression and bullying.
  - 6.4.2 Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the School.
  - 6.4.3 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
  - 6.4.4 Notifying the Child's home area LACSC as soon as there is a significant concern.
  - 6.4.5 Providing continued support to school leavers identified as potentially at risk of abuse, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school and ensuring relevant medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

## **7. Confidentiality**

- 7.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential subject to overriding legal obligations to disclose information to ensure the safety and well-being of a child.
- 7.2 The Head Master or DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only consistent with legal requirements, and in accordance with relevant DfE guidance.
- 7.3 All Staff are made aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 7.4 All Staff are made aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets, which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- 7.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to the LACSC with their parents/carers unless this could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the LACSR on this point.

## **8. Supporting Staff**

- 8.1 We recognise that staff working in the School who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 8.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

## **9. Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff**

- 9.1 Procedures for dealing with allegation of abuse against Staff are carried out in accordance with current HM Government Guidance. All Staff are made aware of this guidance, the School's procedures, and other local guidance relating to this issue.
- 9.2 All School Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- 9.3 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against any member of Staff.
- 9.4 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head and the DSL. The Head Master on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority LADO, then the Chair of Governors where appropriate. In the absence of the Head the allegation should be passed to the Chair of Governors.

- 9.5 If an allegation is made against the Head, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chairman of Governors who will consult as in 9.4 above, without notifying the Head Master first.
- 9.6 An allegation of abuse may be referred by the LADO to a Strategy Meeting, involving representatives from Wimbledon College and the LACSC. A Strategy Meeting also covers any urgent formal strategy discussion which may take place between the police, social care and education managers prior to the first meeting.
- 9.7 We will follow the London Borough of Merton's Disciplinary Procedures when managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is readily available in the school. Disciplinary action will be considered in conjunction with discussions at the Strategy Meeting.
- 9.8 Suspension of the member of Staff, excluding the Head Master, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Head will seek the advice from the LADO before deciding on the course of action to be taken.
- 9.9 In the event of an allegation against the Head Master, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chairman of Governors with advice as in 9.8 above.
- 9.10 Where an allegation is made against a member of the boarding Staff at the CLFS who is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, the school will make appropriate arrangements for alternative accommodation for the staff member away from children.
- 10. Dealing with Allegations of Abuse by one or more Pupil against another Pupil**
- 10.1 Allegations of abuse by one or more pupil against another pupil are taken very seriously.
- 10.2 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head Master and the DSL. The Head on all such occasions will consult with the relevant social care referral point and the Chairman of Governors where appropriate.
- 10.3 We would not normally send the alleged victim home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a Strategy Meeting.
- 10.4 Suspension of the pupil, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Head will seek the advice from the LACSC, and any other relevant London Borough of Merton Officer, before deciding on the course of action to be taken.
- 10.5 Pupils alleged to have sexually abused another should be subject to risk assessment for their continuing education on site, in consultation with Social Care.

## **11. Whistleblowing**

- 11.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where Staff fail to do so.
- 11.2 All Staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude of colleagues.
- 11.3. If it becomes necessary to consult outside of school staff can utilise the London Borough of Merton's 'Whistleblowing' facilities via the telephone hotline and/or website.

## **12. Physical Intervention**

- 12.1 Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in the Staff Handbook, and acknowledges that Staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times the physical interventions must be necessary and proportionate to the level or risk to the child and/or another person. Staff should always avoid touching or restraining a pupil in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.
- 12.2 Such an event should be recorded and signed by a witness should there be one. If there was no witness the Head Master must be informed immediately.
- 12.3 We understand that physical intervention of a nature, which causes injury or distress to a child, may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

## **13. Bullying**

- 13.1 Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures, including homophobic, cyber bullying and gender related bullying.

## **14. Racist Incidents**

- 14.1 Wimbledon College adheres to the London Borough of Merton's Equal Opportunities Policy. The School acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **15. Prevention**

- 15.1 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- 15.2 The school community will therefore:

- 15.3 Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- 15.4 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the School whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- 15.5 Incorporate into the curriculum, including PSHE, information and opportunities which equip children with the awareness and skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- 15.6 Wimbledon College recognizes its role in the “Prevent duty”, to prevent young people being drawn into radicalization and terrorism, according to the terms of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. To this end, staff and pupils receive guidance and training and where there are concerns, staff raise them either with the DSL or directly with external agencies.

## **16. Child Sexual Exploitation**

- 16.1 Wimbledon College works with agencies across the London Borough of Merton, and beyond, to safeguard pupils from the risks of child sexual exploitation (CSE). Staff receive specific guidance on identifying possible indicators of CSE as part of the child protection training and any concerns are referred on either to the DSL or directly to other relevant agencies.

## **17. Health & Safety**

- 17.1 Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, details the measures being taken by the school to promote the health and safety of all children and staff within the school’s environs. Other aspects, such as the procedures for internet use and school trips are set out in this and/or other school policies.

*This policy was accepted by the Governors of Wimbledon College on 30 November 2011 and will be reviewed annually in the Summer term by the College’s Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Governing Body.*

*Reviewed by M. Hartland June 2015*

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY KEY PROFESSIONALS/CONTACTS:**

**Team Manager Vulnerable Children Team** is able to provide advice and consultancy on Child Protection, Safeguarding Issues affecting Children and the team provides Child Protection Training to Schools. The 3 social workers all have named primary schools they support in Merton.

Contact Number: 0208 288 5658/ 07908 573 941

Email : [vctmanager@merton.gov.uk](mailto:vctmanager@merton.gov.uk)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) leads on allegations against staff or trusted adults - Merton's LADO.

## Referrals

The **Team Manager of the Vulnerable Children's Team** is able to provide advice and consultancy on child protection and safeguarding issues affecting children.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0208 288 5658/ 0785 2916188

**E-MAIL:** vctmanager@merton.gov.uk

The **LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)** is Margaret Doe 0208 545 4993 who provides advice on allegations against staff .

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0208 545 4993

**E-MAIL:** lee.hopkins@merton.gov.uk

**For general school advice contact:** 0208 545 3631

**E-mail:** janet.martin@merton.gov.uk

### **REFERRAL TO CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE SERVICES in Merton**

Where schools have **URGENT** and **IMMEDIATE** concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during office hours telephone  
0208 545 4232/4260/4227

To make **URGENT** referrals **OUT OF OFFICE HOURS** telephone  
0208 770 5000

For all **NON - URGENT** referrals and enquiries telephone  
0208 545 4232

**Referrals to Sutton Children Social Care 0208 770 4243/4263**

**Referrals to Richmond Children Social Care 0208 891 7969**

**Referrals to Croydon Children Social Care 0208 726 6400**

**Referrals to Kingston Children Social Care 0208 547 6587**

**Referrals to Wandsworth Children Social Care 0208 871 6622**

**Referrals to Lambeth Children Social Care 0207 926 6400**

*Updated June 2015*