



Queen Victoria School

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

Overview for staff

Updated:

Aug 20

Aug 21

Dec 21

Contents

1. [Overview](#)
2. [What is Child Abuse and Child Neglect](#)
3. [Types of abuse](#)
4. [Responsibilities of protecting CYP](#)
5. [Responding to concerns about a CYP](#)
6. [Who to contact](#)
7. [Remote Learning](#)
8. [Useful school links relating to safeguarding and Child Protection](#)
9. [Annex A Indicators of abuse](#)
10. [Annex B - Guidance for reporting a concern on 3SYS](#)

Overview

The school's aim is to ensure that pupils and staff live and work together in a safe environment. In this environment children will be able to approach adults about matters of concern to them, confident that they will be treated with respect and listened to.

All staff must be alert to the potential indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and attend mandatory safeguarding training to equip them with the skills to know what to do, where to report and how to record effectively if they are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child. All staff are responsible for the positive and pro-active safeguarding culture of QVS and should model honesty, vigilance and integrity as part of a safe environment where children can learn and be listened to.

Our role when working with children and young people (CYP) is to primarily ensure they are safe and to report any concerns you may have about that CYP to the School's CPC.

This document provides an overview of safeguarding and Child protection. If you would require further information/guidance please see

Steve Adams - Child Protection CoOrdinator (CPC).

Alternatively refer to the main school document:

[Guidance on Safeguarding and Child Protection at Queen Victoria School](#)

The school operates a zero physical contact policy between staff and pupils. However they may be occasions when it is appropriate to engage in physical contact:

1. Protect a student from immediate danger/harm
2. Compassionate reasons
3. Aid learning (with the consent of the pupil(s), eg - sports skill or technique/ playing a musical instrument).

Keep pupils safe:

1. The primary indicator for Child Protection is Safety.

There are opportunities in a boarding school to observe signs of unhappiness or abuse that may otherwise pass unnoticed. Vigilance is key to helping create a safe community for pupils and staff.

2. To equip children with knowledge, skills and understanding to keep themselves and others safe.

PSHE, Health and Wellbeing Centre (HWBC), Tutor time, Academic departments and boarding houses also play a major role in contributing to help safeguarding children.

3. To listen to children and take what they say seriously.

The school aims to build up relationships of trust with children who should feel able to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing in the knowledge that staff will listen sensitively and make every effort to deal with their problems.

4. To handle concerns raised with sensitivity, without promising confidentiality

Confidentiality CANNOT be promised to children or adults when they share a concern; in circumstances of serious risk, a staff member will be obliged to pass on the information to the Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC). Please refer to [Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Consent Policy](#) for further information.

5. To have effective procedures for dealing with Child Protection matters.

The major focus will always be on protecting the child from further harm. Staff are reminded by the Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) of procedures at the start of the new academic year.

6. To liaise effectively with external agencies involved in Child Protection.

Child Protection depends on effective inter-agency communication and understanding the roles played by the different agencies involved.

7. To communicate and consult with parents.

Staff work in partnership with parents to promote the wellbeing of children; parents should feel able to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing in the knowledge that these will be dealt with sensitively. Whilst Child Protection issues may cause anxiety, stress and tension within families, parents should be reassured that the school will always act in the best interest of the child.

What does significant risk of harm mean?

Significant harm can result from a specific incident, a series of incidents or an accumulation of concerns over a period of time. It is essential that when considering the presence or likelihood of significant harm that the impact (or potential impact) on the child takes priority and not simply the alleged abusive behaviour. There are no absolute criteria for judging what constitutes significant harm

What is Child Abuse and Child Neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Abuse or neglect may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be maltreated at home; within a family or peer network; in care placements; institutions or community settings; and in the online and digital environment. Those responsible may be previously unknown or familiar, or in positions of trust. They may be family members. Children may be harmed pre-birth, for instance by domestic abuse of a mother or through parental alcohol and drug use.

Types of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

There may be some variation in family, community or cultural attitudes to parenting, for example, in relation to reasonable discipline. Cultural sensitivity must not deflect practitioners from a focus on a child's essential needs for care and protection from harm, or a focus on the need of a family for support to reduce stress and associated risk.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused, or is likely to cause, significant harm. Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- exploitation or corruption of a child, or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age or stage of development
- repeated silencing, ridiculing or intimidation
- demands that so exceed a child's capability that they may be harmful
- extreme overprotection, such that a child is harmed by prevention of learning, exploration and social development
- seeing or hearing the abuse of another (in accordance with the [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#))

Sexual abuse

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child under 16 years of age in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

For those who may be victims of sexual offences aged 16-17, child protection procedures should be considered. These procedures must be applied when there is concern about the sexual exploitation or trafficking of a child.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of indecent images, in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact. It can also occur through the use of technology. Children who are trafficked across borders or within the UK may be at particular risk of sexual abuse.

Criminal exploitation

Criminal exploitation refers to the action of an individual or group using an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Violence or the threat of violence may feature. The victim may have been criminally exploited, even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation may involve physical contact and may also occur through the use of technology. It may involve gangs and organised criminal networks. Sale of illegal drugs may be a feature. Children and vulnerable adults may be exploited to move and store drugs and money. Coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons may be involved.

Child trafficking

Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt, exchange or transfer of control of a child under the age of 18 years for the purposes of exploitation. Transfer or movement can be within an area and does not have to be across borders. Examples of and reasons for trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

Neglect

Neglect consists in persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty, and is an indicator of both support and protection needs.

'Persistent' means there is a pattern which may be continuous or intermittent which has caused, or is likely to cause significant harm. However, single instances of neglectful behaviour by a person in a position of responsibility can be significantly harmful. Early signs of neglect indicate the need for support to prevent harm.

The GIRFEC SHANARRI indicators set out the essential wellbeing needs. Neglect of any or all of these can impact on healthy development. 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); to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment; to ensure the child receives education; or to respond to a child's essential emotional needs.

[Faltering growth](#) refers to an inability to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones in the absence of medically discernible physical and genetic reasons. This condition requires further assessment and may be associated with chronic neglect.

Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and lack of stimulation can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. For very young children the impact could quickly become life-threatening. Chronic physical and emotional neglect may also have a significant impact on teenagers.

Female genital mutilation

This extreme form of physical, sexual and emotional assault upon girls and women involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Such procedures are usually conducted on children and are a criminal offence in Scotland. FGM can be fatal and is associated with long-term physical and emotional harm.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional abuse. Forced marriage is both a child protection and adult protection matter. Child protection processes will be considered up to the age of 18. Forced marriage may be a risk alongside other forms of so called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA). HBA includes practices used to control behaviour within families, communities, or other social groups, to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or 'honour'.

Responsibilities of protecting Child or Young Person

YOU MUST

- Treat all pupils with respect
- Avoid any inappropriate relationship or sexual contact with pupils at our schools. The latter is a criminal offence.
- Always try to be an exemplary role model for pupils
- Respect a pupil's right to personal privacy, but do NOT guarantee confidentiality.
- Ensure that there is another adult present or that you are within sight or hearing of others if you intend to discuss sensitive issues with a pupil
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Be aware of the school's policy regarding the internet and the downloading of inappropriate material
- Be aware of potential child protection issues relating to the use of photographic images of children

YOU MUST NOT

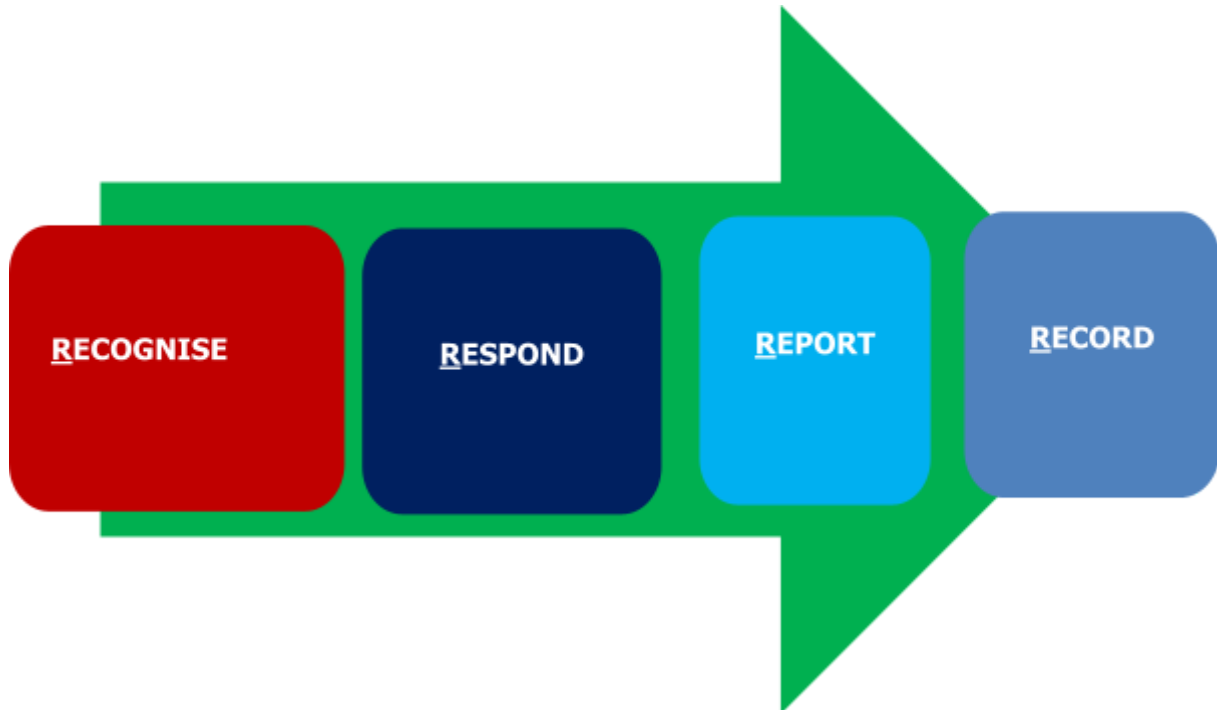
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of pupils
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on your good name or that of the school to protect you
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Jump to conclusions or make assumption about others without checking facts
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour

Responding to concerns about a CYP

- Be Vigilant:

There are opportunities in a boarding school to observe signs of unhappiness or abuse that may otherwise pass unnoticed.

- What are your responsibilities?



The 4 R's

Staff should:

- **Listen** with care.
- **Reassure** the child that he/she is not to blame.
- Not show **disbelief**.
- Not give a guarantee of **confidentiality**.

An example of Framing a conversation.

"I appreciate that this might not be easy for you right now, but I think it is important that we are able to have an open and honest conversation. I have to make it clear that if you tell me anything that suggests you are at significant risk of harm to yourself or others, I have a duty of care to share that information. I am not able to promise confidentiality for you but please be aware that I will always try and act in your best interest."

- Take the allegation **seriously**.
- Affirm the child's **feelings** as expressed (don't tell the child how he/she should feel).
- Avoid being **judgmental** about the information given by the child.

- Avoid a “**whodunit**” approach (a casual enquiry about who did it is all right, but do not pursue the matter; remember, it can be distressing for children to be faced with persistent questioning).
- **Refer** to the Child Protection Co-ordinator in accordance with school guidelines (using 3SYS Pastoral management reporting module)

Whilst the primary function of school staff is to listen and record, some casual questioning may be appropriate. The child should not be interrogated. Any questions should aim to obtain basic information. If the child does not respond, the matter should not be pursued further. The pursuit and recovery of evidence is a matter for the police, if necessary. Where questions are asked, “open-ended” questions should be used rather than “leading” questions which suggest possible answers. Avoid questions beginning with ‘how’ or ‘why’.

The 4 W's

- Keep questions open ended.
- Do not prompt or suggest to obtain the answer you think you want to hear.

Some examples of:

Open ended Questions

Open:

WHEN When did it happen?

WHERE Where did it happen?

WHO Who did it?

WHAT What happened?

Leading Questions:

Leading:

Did it happen last night?

Did he/she come into your bedroom?

Was it daddy//baby-sitter/John?

Did such and such happen?

- Record notes of initial disclosure, (record factual information any specific comments from child), complete Child Protection 1 form on 3SYS and ensure you speak to the Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) immediately. Referral to CPC MUST happen on the same day as the disclosure made.

- If you are in any doubt – **TAKE ADVICE**

DO'S

- Stay calm
- Listen and show concern
- Keep questions to a minimum
- Reassure the child they were right to tell
- Explain what you will do next

DON'T'S

- Ask leading questions
- Agree to confidentiality
- Show or express disbelief
- Say you believe them or can make it 'better'
- Express shock or anger
- Investigate
- Delay passing concern on

Recording - Key Principles:

Staff understand the importance of recording any concerns held about a child and ensure that records comprise of a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.

- Factual, consistent and accurate
- Written/recorded as soon as possible after an event has occurred
- Observations may be recorded.
- Records are legal documents - They can be called into court for evidence
- They can be used in relation to professional conduct matter
- They will be audited and reviewed for in-house quality assurance and for Be audited and reviewed –HMle & CI inspections.
- Alterations/amendments dated and signed
- Remember to open & continually update chronology

WHAT TO DO

If a pupil discloses to you abuse by someone else:

- Offer immediate support, understanding and reassurance explaining that you must pass on the information and that you cannot promise confidentiality
- Take the allegation seriously

- Allow him or her to speak without interruption, accepting what is said **but do not investigate**
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing not judgemental statements like 'I believe you', 'it's not your fault' and 'I'm going to help you'
- Let the child know you are glad he or she has shared this information with you and that you will have to pass the information on to someone else in the school

If you suspect a pupil is being abused emotionally, physically or sexually:

OR

If you receive an allegation about any adult:

- Immediately inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) - DHT(P&G) Steve Adams or Deputy CPC - DHT(PS) Jill Adams, if Steve Adams is unavailable. If neither staff are available then contact the Headmaster- Donald Shaw or DHT (AC) Janette Scott-Laing.
- If the concern is in relation to the school's CPC, report the matter directly to the Head.
- If the concern is in relation to the Head, report the matter directly to the school's CPC.
- You **MUST NOT** contact the adult that the concern has been raised against.
- Ensure no situation arises which could cause further concern.

In all cases:

- Write up a record of the facts using the Child Protection Concern form 1 on 3SYS and report these to the Child Protection Co-ordinator, in person, on the same day. [Guidance for reporting a Child Protection concern using 3SYS](#)
- You **must** refer; try to establish some basic facts - you **must not** investigate

Who to contact

Please speak to:

Steve Adams:	Office: 0131 310 2973	Wk Mb:	07971 925780
Jill Adams:	Office 0131 310 2961	Wk Mb:	07971925782

[Contact details of SLT and HoMs](#)

Action taken by school

[Flow chart of school procedures](#)

Action by Staff in exceptional circumstances

By law, any person with concerns about a child has a right to make a report direct to the CPU and/or the Reporter to the Children's Panel. In exceptional cases, where a member of staff feels that concerns about a child are not being taken seriously, or followed through appropriately or with sufficient speed, it is perfectly legitimate for that member of staff to refer the matter directly to the Reporter.

Any member of staff can make a referral directly to Statutory Social Services if you are concerned about a child and believe it is not being managed appropriately by the school.

Remote Learning

During the pandemic, Queen Victoria School has continued to work hard to stay connected with the school community. Throughout this period of Remote Learning, the school aims to provide safe, high quality lessons that are live and interactive as well as maintain our ethos of pastoral care to meet the wellbeing needs of our students.

We acknowledge that whilst they are at home, there has been a shift in direct responsibility for the pupils, however this does not remove the important role the school has to play in educating and supporting our students.

The QVS Online Hub will help us to provide continuity through providing parents with information about online learning, wellbeing advice and plenty of signposting to support the school community. This Hub outlines and supports our remote learning and pastoral strategy, but it goes without saying that we may need to adapt as we learn and develop our approaches.

Safeguarding remains our primary focus and you will find our school guidelines relating to the remote education we are providing here on the Hub. Remote Learning: Safeguarding and Child Protection guidance has been provided to all staff, parents and pupils.

- [Remote Learning - Safeguarding Guidance for Staff \(Aug 21\)](#)

A similar pastoral support structure to the one we use whilst school is in session, to help meet the wellbeing needs of the pupils. The approach is adapted to compensate for the remote nature of the pastoral care we are able to provide. As well as providing effective

remote learning, we will continue to focus on staying connected and would encourage your child/children to engage fully with staff and other pupils, to help maintain a vital sense of connection as a QVS community during this time.

Raising a concern

Staff are able to raise a concern about the behaviour of another member of staff using the raising a concern tab on the school sharepoint homepage. The concern is sent directly to the school's CPC who will review the information and initiate appropriate action. Staff are reminded that although a concern is raised, it is not necessarily to accuse a member of staff of wrongdoing.

Whistle Blowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Queen Victoria follows the guidance of the MOD Whistle Blowing Policy which can be found on the MOD Schools Safeguarding Area. Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the policy or call the designated Whistleblowing support service that can be accessed on 0800 161 3665 (STD) or +44 1371 85 4881 (Overseas) for independent advice and guidance

Useful school links relating to safeguarding and Child Protection

- [Code of Conduct for staff - Guidance on interaction with pupils](#)
- [Anti Bullying Policy](#)
- [Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Consent Policy](#)
- [Raising a concern](#)
- [Missing Pupil](#)
- [Remote Learning - Safeguarding Guidance for Staff \(April 21\)](#)

Annex A: Indicators of Abuse

(Please note this is not an exhaustive list)

Physical Abuse:

Injuries inflicted by physical abuse tend to involve softer tissue and be in areas that are harder to damage through slips, trips, falls and other accidents. This may include:

- Upper arm
- Forearm (defensive injuries)
- Chest and abdomen
- Thighs or genitals
- Facial injuries (cheeks, black eyes, mouth) ears, side of face or neck and top of shoulders ('triangle of safety')
- Back and side of trunk

Abusive injuries may be seen on both sides of the body and match other patterns of activity. They may not match the explanation given by the child or parent/carer and there may also be signs that injuries are being untreated, or at least a delay in seeking treatment.

Sexual abuse: This may take place either in person or online or offline. It may be perpetrated by family or non-family members, males or females, older adults or by other young people.

- Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Sudden change in behaviour or school performance
- Displays of affection that are sexual or not age- appropriate
- Use of sexually explicit language that is not age- appropriate
- Alluding to having a secret that cannot be revealed
- Bedwetting or incontinence
- Reluctance to undress around others (e.g. for PE lessons)
- Infections, unexplained genital discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Self-harming

- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

Emotional/Psychological Abuse:

Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of abuse or neglect, though it may also appear alone. Emotional abuse may also be perpetrated by other young people through serious bullying and cyber-bullying.

- Concerning interactions between parents or carers and the child (e.g. overly critical or lack of affection)
- Lack of self-confidence or self-esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harm or eating disorders
- Lack of empathy shown to others (including cruelty to animals)
- Drug, alcohol or other substance misuse
- Change of appetite, weight loss/gain
- Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger

Neglect:

Neglect is a persistent failure to meet basic needs (physical or emotional) and it leads to serious harm to the health or development of a child.

- Inadequate or insufficient clothing
- Excessive hunger
- Poor personal or dental hygiene
- Untreated medical issues
- Changes in weight or being excessively under or overweight
- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression or self-harm
- Poor relationships with peers
- Self-soothing behaviours that may not be age-appropriate (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking) · Changes to school performance or

[Annex B - Guidance for reporting a concern on 3SYS](#)

