



The Skinners' School

Safeguarding and Student Welfare Policy

Policy Area:	Pastoral and Safeguarding
Reviewed:	August 2015
Adopted:	September 2015
Next Review:	June 2016
Governing Committee:	Governing Board
LG Responsibility:	Edward Wesson



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Safeguarding and Student Welfare Policy

1 Introduction

The Skinners' School believes that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; it is an environment where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.

The School recognises that because staff are in regular and frequent contact with children, they are particularly well placed to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. The School is aware of the responsibilities which all staff have with regard to the welfare of students.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 introduced a duty on governing bodies to have arrangements to ensure that they exercise their functions with a view to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This requires schools to review policies and procedures annually.

2 Definition

Safeguarding is "the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully" *Working Together to Safeguard Children DfES 2006*.

Safeguarding is more than what may previously have been understood by Child Protection. It is an awareness of the need to keep children safe in all aspects of their life, both in school and out of school. It is about encouraging healthy and safe choices and lifestyles. It should thread its way into all aspects of the School's teaching and tutoring.

It includes also bullying: cyber-bullying, prejudice based on special educational needs, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability.

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School. We must:

- a) Ensure we practise safe recruitment in line with Government guidance by using at least one NCSL accredited recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- b) Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. This includes the need to stay safe on the Internet.
- c) Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected, cases of abuse.
- d) Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with agreed child protection plans.
- e) Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

3 Guidelines

It is the responsibility of everyone in the Skinners' School community to be vigilant about safeguarding and student welfare.

The Headmaster will:

- Ensure that everyone knows what safeguarding is and that it is taken seriously.
- Ensure that there is a designated Teacher in Charge of Looked After Children (LAC) and a Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) who receives appropriate training and a nominated governor responsible for child protection who has received appropriate training.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the DSL.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Encourage students and parents to inform the Skinners' School of any concerns.
- Ensure that the School has access to the external and internal resources to offer extensive support.
- Monitor the processes for promoting student welfare and safeguarding to ensure that adequate resources are given to it.
- Work with the Governors to put mechanisms in place to ensure that students requiring safeguarding measures are monitored in relation to their situation and progress with their learning. A report will be prepared for Governors.
- Work with the Head of Drama to ensure all language used in school productions is reasonable and in the context of the play; a member of the Leadership Group will attend all examined performances.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.

The school must:

- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main student file; and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer including supply or agency workers, contractors or governors.
- Ensure that all requests for information are dealt with appropriately, taking the issue of safeguarding into account.
- Ensure that the development of the use of new and existing media technologies do not expose students to any potential harm.
- Work with the teaching and support staff colleagues to ensure safeguarding when using digital media and education of students in safe use of the Internet.

Staff should:

- Always be aware of the needs of young people, and be vigilant for any possible signs of abuse.
- Not spend time alone with young people, especially away from others. Meetings with individual young people should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should be left partly open with other staff present or informed of the meeting.
- Not have unnecessary physical contact with young people. There may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable or necessary, such as providing comfort or reassurance, or for physical support. Contact may also take place during sports. Physical contact should, however, only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be made clear. Staff/student sports events should be considered carefully and agreed with SLT before they take place.
- Understand that if physical contact is made to restrain youngsters, it should do so only in circumstances where those pupils are in danger of hurting either themselves or someone else.
- Not take young people alone in a car journey, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents or carers, and someone in

charge of the activity. Staff should be able to state the purpose and anticipated length of the route and will have checked insurance liability.

- Not contact or meet with young people outside organized activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents and someone in charge of the activity.
- Ensure that their personal relationships do not affect the young people around them.
- Should remember that on rare occasions young people themselves can be responsible for abusing their peers.

Staff should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games with children.
- Allow students to use inappropriate language unchallenged (eg. racist, sexist or homophobic comments).
- Make sexually suggestive comments in front of, about, or to a young person, even in fun.
- Mock pupils.
- Let allegations made by a young person go without being addressed and recorded.
- Deter young people from making allegations through fear of not being believed.
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts.
- Rely on their own good name to protect them (ie. everyone regardless of position should adhere to these guidelines).

Students should:

- Understand the need to keep individuals safe.
- Be aware of other people's feelings and sensitivities.
- Understand that some 'jokes' are not commonly understood or appreciated and may cause offence.
- Encourage each other to report any concerns or issues.
- Be prepared to accept that people make mistakes and can learn from them.

4 Procedures

Designated Safeguarding Lead: *Julian Metcalf (Second Master)*

Governor responsible for Safeguarding: *John Breeze*

Safeguarding Team: *Edward Wesson (Headmaster), Chris Johnson (Head of Transition), Craig Fleming (Head of Sixth Form), Marije Field (SENCO)*

Teacher responsible for Looked After Children: *Susan Phyll (Assistant Head)*

All professionals have a duty to refer cases where abuse is known to have occurred or is suspected.

No professional has the right or responsibility to withhold information or to respect a child's/young person's wish for confidentiality.

If a member of staff suspects abuse he/she should report this as soon as possible to the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding team. If in any doubt, he/she should report it. The following information would be appropriate:

- **The full name of the child**
- **Where in the school when the disclosure took place**
- **What was said: words and descriptions**
- **Whether the child showed you an injury; where is it, colour, size, what does it look like**
- **Other contextual information about the child**
- **Where the child is now**

Staff are fully entitled to go over the head of the DSL or Safeguarding team if they feel the matter is not being dealt with adequately. This includes contacting the following:

- **Local Authority:** KCC has a 24 hour helpline: **03000 41 11 11** (text relay 18001 03000 41 11 11) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk
- **Local Authority Designate Officer:** Jinder Kaur: 03000 412284
- **Local police or dial 101 (non-emergency number); if an emergency, dial 999**
- **Contact DfE – 020 7340 7264** counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy every year and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the DfE document Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)

September 2015

Appendix 1: E Safety Strategy

Premise: the constant evolution of new technology and our increased exposure to this medium provides both windows of opportunity and new vulnerabilities.

E Safety is therefore one of the school's Safeguarding responsibilities.

It has two significant components:

1. Safeguarding (protecting) yourself
2. Safeguarding our students

Both components fall within the CEOP 'Think U Know' campaign slogan: *Prevent, Pursue, Protect.*

CEOP (formerly the Child Protection and Online Protection Centre) works with child protection partners across the UK and overseas to identify the main threats to children. It coordinates activity against these threats to bring offenders to account.

All staff have a responsibility to:

- be aware of their current and past data footprint and its potential impact (with particular reference to social media in its many forms)
- be aware of the Staff Code of Conduct for Teaching and Support Staff at The Skinners' School (with particular reference to 'Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Students and Staff')
- be aware of the Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

Technology is constantly evolving, so risks are constantly changing. Our role as teachers and support staff is as follows:

1. To challenge inappropriate behaviour in all its forms
2. To educate through assemblies, PSHE and form time about the potential vulnerabilities as well as reinforce the positive opportunities that technology can bring.
3. To report to Designated Child Protection Officers our concerns about individuals. Those concerns might arise from observations of pupils' behaviour, their internet history, comments made in school, concerns raised by other pupils or colleagues.

Appendix 2 – Prevent Strategy

Premise: the UK faces a severe and continuing threat from international terrorism

Its counter-terrorism strategy, called CONTEST, has four main components:

1. Pursue – to stop terrorist attacks
2. Prepare – where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact
3. Protect – to strengthen our overall protection against terrorist attacks
4. Prevent – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremists

Schools are fundamentally involved in the fourth of these of components.

The **Prevent Strategy** aims to:

- Challenge violent extremist ideology
- Disrupt those who promote violent extremism
- Support individuals who are being targeted
- Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism
- Address the grievances that ideologues exploit

The community work that schools are integral to involves reducing inequalities, tackling racism and other forms of extremism (eg far right dogma) and building cohesion.

The remit of Safeguarding now goes far beyond the notion of recognising and reporting concerns about individual pupils who are at risk of significant harm. Equally the concept of ‘significant harm’ is wider than its original scope of physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect. Schools have to play an active role in confronting a range of risks.

We live in an area of relatively low risk. But our role is as follows:

1. To challenge extremism in all its forms
2. To educate through assemblies, PSHE and form time about racism and extremism, and about principles of democracy as opposed to totalitarianism. There is a hint at the Ofsted demand that we promote British values.
3. To report to Designated Child Protection Officers our concerns about individuals. Those concerns might arise from observations of pupils’ behaviour, their internet history, comments made in school, concerns raised by other pupils.