

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Manor Preparatory School fully recognises the contribution it makes to Child Protection and is committed to taking all reasonable measures to ensure that risks to its pupils' welfare are minimised.

The statutory framework for child protection was established in *The Children Act* (1989). The duty of Independent School proprietors and/or governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school was explicitly stated in the *Education Act 2002*. Independent Schools are also recommended to follow the DfES guidance published as *Safeguarding Children in Education* (2004) and *Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings* (2005).

The School aims to:

- Provide a safe educational environment for pupils
- Maintain vigilance in detecting abuse and operate clear procedures for all staff to follow in cases of suspected abuse
- Ensure that pupils who are vulnerable, at risk and/or likely to suffer significant harm are identified and appropriate action is taken to keep them safe
- Monitor effectively pupils who are vulnerable or at risk
- Promote an ethos in which pupils feel safe, feel able to talk openly and are listened to
- Prevent unsuitable people working with children
- Promote, and share with parents and pupils, safe practice
- Ensure that all parents and guardians are aware of the School's child protection responsibilities
- Ensure that proper written records of any child protection concerns/cases are kept and maintained confidentially.

All those employed by the School or who will come into unsupervised contact with pupils as volunteers are subject to checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. A rigorous checking of qualifications and references will also be undertaken by the School before offering anyone employment.

Appropriate general training on Child Protection issues will be provided at regular intervals to members of staff and specialist training will be attended by the designated contact in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Manor Preparatory School, as a result of its location, comes under the Oxfordshire Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC). Regardless of where a pupil actually lives, any case must be referred to the Oxfordshire Social Services Department. All contact with the Social Services must be made through the Designated Child Protection Contact, Mr Piers Heyworth, the Headmaster, or in his absence through his Deputy, Mrs Anita Stokes. The School has a nominated Child Protection Governor: Mrs Annie Eccles.

Any member of staff who has knowledge or suspicion that a pupil is suffering significant harm or is at risk of significant harm should refer their concerns immediately to the designated contact. It is not appropriate for staff to conduct any kind of investigation or to ask leading questions of a pupil. It is not possible to promise a pupil confidentiality as one is obliged to pass on information if a pupil may be at risk. However, child protection issues should never be discussed with anyone other than the designated contact (or later the official investigation team). Fuller guidance is available in the ACPC Child Protection Handbook, copies are available in the Staff Room and School Office.

If a member of staff is accused of abuse by a child, the Headmaster, Deputy Head and Head of Department are informed as soon as possible.

- The Head does an initial investigation. If he considers that there is a possibility of abuse he informs the Chairman of Governors.
- Advice is sought from the ACPC/Social Services by the Head.

The Bursar is seen as an independent representative, and should not be involved in any “in-school” discussion.

If the accused member of staff is any of the above, the Chairman of Governors (or his/her Vice Chairman) will appoint a suitable colleague to seek advice from the ACPC/Social Services on the best procedure.