



RANBY HOUSE SCHOOL
Prep School to Worksop College

RANBY HOUSE SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Ranby House School fully recognises its responsibilities for Child Protection. Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse, which means in this policy, any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill treatment.
- 1.2 Our policy applies to all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, including school medical and nursing staff, and will be supplied to parents on request. It applies to all areas of the school including Early Years (EYFS).
- 1.3 There are five main elements to our policy:
- Ensuring we practise **safe recruitment** in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
 - Raising **awareness of child protection issues** and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
 - Developing and then implementing **procedures** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
 - **Supporting a pupil** who has been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
 - Establishing a **safe environment** in which children can learn and develop.
- 1.4 The school appoints a Designated Person with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection, currently Mr Rob Searle, and a Deputy Designated Person, currently Mrs Sarah Johns. Both roles also cover Early Years (EYFS).

2. SAFE RECRUITMENT

- 2.1 Ranby House School recognises that it is vital to adopt recruitment and selection procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.
- 2.2 Recruitment procedures are outlined in our document '**Procedures for Recruitment of New Staff**' [2009] and are carried out in accordance with guidance given in '*Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings*', issued by the Department for Education and Skills on 14

November 2006 under the Government's *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* agenda.

2.3 To ensure safer recruitment, the procedures are designed to:

2.3.1 Scrutinise applicants;

2.3.2 Verify identity;

2.3.3 Verify academic or vocational qualifications;

2.3.4 Obtain professional and character references;

2.3.5 Check previous employment history;

2.3.6 Ensure that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job;

2.3.7 Incorporate a face to face interview;

2.3.8 Include an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check and reference to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) List - formerly known as List 99. List 99 was the information held under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002 and contains the details of those who are considered unsuitable or banned from working with children.

2.3.9 Apply to all adults who may work with the children in either a paid or voluntary capacity, and ensure that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to all staff employed by another organisation and who are working with the school's pupils on another site.

3. AWARENESS OF CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Ranby House School will therefore:

3.1 Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;

3.2 Ensure that children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

3.3 Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know whom to turn to for help;

3.4 Include, in the curriculum, material that will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills;

3.5 Ensure all staff, including ancillary staff and governors, receive comprehensive training on child protection issues every three years. In addition all new staff will receive training as part of their induction

process and, to ensure best practice, the designated person for child protection will receive appropriate training every two years.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 We will follow the procedures set out by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DFE).

4.2 Particular attention is drawn to the following documents which have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in accordance with section 157 Education Act 2002 and associated regulations:

4.2.1 '*Safeguarding Children in Education*' [DfES/0027/2004]. Issued in September 2004, this document is about the duty of schools to have arrangements for carrying out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

4.2.2 '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' [DfES/ISBN: 0-11-271187-1] Issued in January 2007, this document sets out how individuals and organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

4.2.3 '*What to do if you're Worried a Child is being Abused*' [DfES/ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5]. This document, issued in January 2006, provides best practice guidance for those who work with children in order to safeguard their welfare. It also outlines the following:

- What people should do if they have concerns about a child's welfare;
- What will happen once they have informed someone about those concerns;
- What further contribution they may be asked or expected to make.

4.2.4 All these documents can be found at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk and copies are available for staff on the Staff-Shared Drive/Child Protection Documents.

4.3 TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES, RANBY HOUSE SCHOOL WILL:

4.3.1 Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for such a role. The school also appoints a Deputy Designated Person to cover in the event of absence;

- 4.3.2 Designate a governor for child protection who will oversee and monitor the school's child protection policy and practice. As a result of the annual review of the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures, conducted by the governors, any deficiencies or weaknesses in Child protection arrangements will be remedied immediately.
- 4.3.3 Ensure that every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body know and understand:
- The name of the designated person and his/her role;
 - Their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection.
 - The procedures identified within the school policy.
- 4.3.4 Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to safeguarding and child protection, by publishing appropriate policies on the school's website;
- 4.3.5 Ensure that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may tell of abuse;
- 4.3.6 Provide Child Protection training within the induction programme for all new staff and governors;
- 4.3.7 Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters;
- 4.3.8 Deal appropriately and immediately with every suggestion or complaint of abuse. Any allegation or suspicion of abuse, from within or outside the School, will be investigated and in all proper circumstances will be referred to an external agency such as the social services department of the local authority (SSD), the child protection unit of the police (CPU) or the NSPCC in accordance with the procedures published by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB);
- 4.3.9 When following up incidents or allegations, staff will consider the welfare of all children. Where it is deemed necessary to speak with pupils, those involved will be offered the option of having another adult present. Where allegations are of a serious nature, parents or guardians will routinely be invited to attend, unless the allegation is of a nature where their presence may cause greater upset or jeopardise any possible police action.
- 4.3.10 Keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even when there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately;
- 4.3.11 Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations;

- 4.3.12 Design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations;
- 4.3.13 Ensure safe recruitment practices are carried out;
- 4.3.14 Take all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances permit;
- 4.3.15 Ensure that the duty of care towards pupils and staff is promoted, by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- 4.3.16 Operate robust and sensible Health & Safety procedures;
- 4.3.17 Be alert to the medical needs of all children (particularly those with specific requirements).

4.4 IN THE EVENT OF AN ALLEGATION, THE FOLLOWING WILL BE CONSIDERED:

4.4.1 INITIAL COMPLAINT:

A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:

- 4.4.1.1 Must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place;
- 4.4.1.2 Must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer;
- 4.4.1.3 Must reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to a Designated Person who will ensure that the correct action is taken;
- 4.4.1.4 Must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials;
- 4.4.1.5 Must keep the record secure and hand it to the Designated Person.

4.4.2 PRESERVING EVIDENCE:

All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

4.4.3 REPORTING:

All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Person, or if it involves the Designated Person, to the Headmaster.

4.4.4 ACTION BY THE DESIGNATED PERSON:

The Designated Person will contact Social Services if they believe a child may be **in need** or **at risk of significant harm** and will follow this up with a written referral. The child may well be told what action is being taken and what will happen next.

Any complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the police without further investigation within the School.

If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Person may consult with appropriate professionals on an informal basis.

Action taken may include:

- Sharing information with the Headmaster, designated Governor or Deputy Designated Person
- Contacting the parents or carers
- Calling an internal Pastoral Meeting to discuss the situation – all appropriate persons would be invited (*e.g. Form Tutor, House Parents, Nurse, Matrons*). At this point a Pastoral Care Plan may be instigated.

The action to be taken will take into account:

- 4.4.4.1 Ranby House School's Policy on Child Protection;
- 4.4.4.2 The procedures published by Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB);
- 4.4.4.3 The nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. Any complaint involving a serious criminal offence will

always be referred to the SSD or the police without further investigation within the School;

- 4.4.4.4 The wishes of the pupil, who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil's wishes;
- 4.4.4.5 The wishes of Parents provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated Person is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, he or she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose;
- 4.4.4.6 Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable;
- 4.4.4.7 The lawful rights and interests of the school community as a whole including its employees and its insurers;
- 4.4.4.8 If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Person may consult with appropriate professionals on an informal basis. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay;
- 4.4.4.9 If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Person will confirm the referral in writing to SSD within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Person will contact Social Services again.

4.4.5 REFERRAL GUIDELINES:

A referral to the SSD or police will not normally be made where:

- 4.4.5.1 The complaint does not involve a serious criminal offence; and
- 4.4.5.2 A referral would be contrary to the wishes of a pupil complainant who is of sufficient maturity and understanding and properly informed, and contrary also to the wishes of the complainant's parents; and
- 4.4.5.3 The case is one that can be satisfactorily investigated and dealt with under the School's internal procedures, the parents being kept fully informed, as appropriate.
- 4.4.5.4 However, if during the course of the internal procedures, it appears that the situation is more serious, the Designated

Person will again consider whether a referral should be made in accordance with section 4.4.4 above.

4.4.6 **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS OR THE HEADMASTER:**

- 4.4.6.1 When dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) the School aims to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations;
- 4.4.6.2 The school will follow the guidance in *'Safeguarding Children in Education: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff'* (DFES/2044/2005);
- 4.4.6.3 Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:
- The safety and welfare of the pupils or pupil concerned;
 - The need for a full and fair investigation.
- 4.4.6.4 Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Headmaster, the Designated Person will report to and consult with the Custos (Chair of Governors) or, in their absence, the Designated Governor. This will be done immediately and without consultation with the Headmaster.
- 4.4.6.5 Where an allegation or complaint is made against staff, volunteers or the designated person, the Headmaster will be informed or, in their absence, the Custos (Chair of Governors).
- 4.4.6.6 Any member of staff under suspension would be required to live at their own home, or at another residence, which wasn't on school premises. If it were not possible for off-site accommodation to be sourced by the member of staff, then the School would ensure suitable accommodation is provided. Under these circumstances the School recognises any suspension is a 'neutral' act and no action should be taken as an expression of opinion or judgement.
- 4.4.6.7 In the event of any person (in any capacity) leaving the school as a result of them being considered unsuitable to work with children, the school will report this to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month (*PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA [0300 123 1111]*). The school recognises that the governors of independent schools have a legal duty to respond to requests from the ISA for information they hold already, but do not have to find it from other sources.

4.4.7 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PUPILS:

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply.

4.4.8 SUSPECTED HARM FROM OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL:

A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the School should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions.

A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and if the member of staff continues to be concerned he or she should refer the matter to the Designated Officer.

5. SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK

- 5.1 Ranby House recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.
- 5.2 The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant and they may be withdrawn.
- 5.3 Ranby House will endeavour to support the child through:
- 5.3.1 The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- 5.3.2 The PSHE programme pupils will be taught to develop a healthy, safer lifestyle by being able to:
- Recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly;
 - Judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable;
 - Recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being and develop effective ways of resisting pressure; including knowing when and where to get help;
 - Be assertive to help resist unhelpful pressure.
- 5.3.3 The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued;
- 5.3.4 The school behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- 5.3.5 Liaison with other agencies who support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service;
- 5.3.6 Drawing up a child protection plan, in consultation with other agencies if appropriate, that will identify strategies to assist a child in need.
- 5.3.7 Keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.
- 5.3.8 When a pupil on the Child Protection register leaves, Ranby House will transfer information to the next school. If the school does not know where the pupil has moved to, we will contact the LEA Child Protection officer as soon as possible.
- 5.3.9 When a pupil leaves Ranby House School and there is a recorded concern, but no referral has been made to Social Services, the school will pass concerns on to the new school.

6. A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Ranby House School recognises the need to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. To facilitate this, the School will:

- 6.1 Risk-Assess all areas of school and keep records;
- 6.2 Fit all external doors, which offer access to areas used by pupils, with combination locks to prevent access by strangers. The codes for these locks will be changed annually;
- 6.3 Not lock internal doors in areas being used by pupils;
- 6.4 Fit, where possible, glass panels into the doors of classrooms;
- 6.5 Ensure that all visitors to the school are required to sign in at reception on arrival. Visitors not representing Woodard Schools (Nottinghamshire) Limited (WSNL) will be required to wear their identity badges or be issued with school visitor badges upon verification of their identity;
- 6.6 Ensure that staff are vigilant and will either report unidentified visitors immediately to the School Office or challenge the person directly if safe to do so. At times when the office is closed, staff should alert the Headmaster or other senior manager on duty;
- 6.7 Be aware that there are occasionally times when large numbers of unknown visitors may be on site (e.g. fixtures, open mornings, plays or concerts). On these occasions, only visitors found in areas inappropriate to the event or whose behaviour causes concern will be reported or challenged.

7. THE DESIGNATED PERSON

- 7.1 Ranby House School has appointed an experienced and suitably qualified member of staff as Designated Person to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. The **Designated Person for Safeguarding** was formerly known as the Child Protection Officer. The Headmaster and Deputy Designated Person support the Designated Person.
- 7.2 The main responsibilities of the Designated Person are to:
 - 7.2.1 Be conversant with Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) procedures and the role of other agencies;
 - 7.2.2 Follow Ranby House School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies and co-ordinate child protection procedures in the School;
 - 7.2.3 Be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection;

- 7.2.4 Consult with the Children's Services department on issues if an allegation or suspicion occurs and to liaise with the various child protection agencies where appropriate;
 - 7.2.5 Keep the Headmaster informed of all actions unless the Headmaster is the subject of a complaint. In this situation, the Designated Person should consult with the Custos;
 - 7.2.6 Cooperate with police and Children's Services investigations;
 - 7.2.7 Liaise with the Headmaster and Director of Studies regarding INSET training for all school employees on child protection issues;
 - 7.2.8 Attend training every 2 years;
 - 7.2.9 Keep appropriate records;
 - 7.2.10 Support staff.
- 7.3 If the Designated Person is unavailable then the Deputy Designated Person or the Headmaster will carry out their duties. If the Designated Person is the subject of a complaint, then the Headmaster will investigate.

8. HELPFUL INFORMATION

This section is designed to provide information that facilitates understanding of key terminology and indicators:

8.1 WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

8.1.1 A person may abuse or neglect a child/young person by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

8.1.2 There are four categories of child abuse in the Children Act:

8.1.2.1 Physical abuse:

This involves hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. This can include fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

8.1.2.2 Neglect:

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It can include such things as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

8.1.2.3 Emotional Abuse:

This is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child which causes severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional

development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved. They may feel inadequate, or valued only because they meet the needs of another person. They may suffer inappropriate expectations being imposed on them (beyond their age and level of maturity). This is likely to result in them frequently feeling frightened and may lead to the exploitation or corruption of the child.

8.1.2.4 **Sexual Abuse:**

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact, including penetrative (rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. It may include children looking at, or involved in the production of, pornographic material. It may simply be the act of encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

8.2 **DEFINITION OF HARM & SIGNIFICANT HARM - ADOPTION & CHILDREN ACT 2002 (SECTION 10)**

8.2.1 Ill treatment or the impairment of health or development (impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another).

'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

'Health' means physical or mental health;

'Ill treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

8.2.2 NB: The Adoption & Children Act 2002 s120 amended the definition of harm to include those instances where a child may witness **domestic violence**.

8.3 **RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT HARM.**

Significant harm involves an allegation of a sexual nature or parents whose behaviour may present risk because of:

8.3.1 Domestic violence, drug & alcohol abuse and mental health problems;

8.3.2 Any physical injury caused by assault or neglect which requires medical attention;

8.3.3 Repeated incidents of physical harm;

8.3.4 Any contact with a person assessed as presenting a risk to children;

8.3.5 Children who live in low emotional warmth, high criticism environments;

8.3.6 Children who suffer from persistent neglect;

8.3.7 Children who may be involved in prostitution;

8.3.8 Other circumstances where professional judgement and/or evidence suggest a child's health, development or welfare may be significantly harmed.

8.4 INDICATORS OF ABUSE

8.4.1 Physical:

- Unexplained injuries, burns, bruises;
- Finger marks;
- Fear of undressing or medical help;
- Improbable explanations for injuries;
- Fear of returning home or parents being contacted; and
- Unexplained absence from school.

8.4.2 Neglect:

- Constant hunger;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Inappropriate clothing;
- Frequent lateness and non attendance;
- Poor social relationships;
- Constant tiredness;
- Independent & street wise;
- No parental support for education; and
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging.

8.4.3 Emotional Abuse:

- Fear of new situations;
- Inappropriate emotional responses;
- Self harm;
- Reluctance to accept praise;
- Low self esteem;
- Lack of home support;
- Depressed and withdrawn;
- Social isolation – not joining in, and few friends.

8.4.4 Sexual Abuse:

- Bruises;
- Scratches;
- Bite marks on the body;
- Persistent infections in the anal or genital area;
- Any sexual awareness inappropriate to child's age – shown in drawings, play, vocabulary;
- Frequent masturbation;
- Changes in behaviour;
- Refusal to stay with certain people;
- Self-harm;
- Depression;
- Low self-esteem;
- Pregnancy.

8.5 **RECOGNITION OF ABUSE**

Be open to possibilities. Be aware – if you don't believe it is possible you will never see it. Don't jump to conclusions and look for credible non-abusive explanations, but recognise you may need to seek advice to evaluate the facts. Don't let your preconceptions of the family skew your judgement.

8.6 **THE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS AND DISTRESS**

An abused child will usually show signs of stress and distress. Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Many of these may of course have nothing to do with abuse, but are worth consideration in trying to understand the child's behaviour:

- 8.6.1 A drop in school performance;
- 8.6.2 Aggressive or hostile behaviour;
- 8.6.3 Difficulties in relationships with peers;
- 8.6.4 Excessively affectionate or sexual behaviour towards adults or other children;
- 8.6.5 Regression to more immature forms of behaviour;
- 8.6.6 Self-harming or suicidal behaviour;
- 8.6.7 No reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injuries, or a pattern of injuries;
- 8.6.8 Disturbed sleep.

8.7 **HELPING A CHILD WHO WANTS TO TELL YOU ABOUT ABUSE**

- 8.7.1 Staff should remember that the priority is to protect the child;
- 8.7.2 The matter should be taken seriously;
- 8.7.3 React calmly & listen carefully;
- 8.7.4 Observe but do not judge;
- 8.7.5 Don't stop the child who is freely recalling significant events;
- 8.7.6 Reassure the child that s/he has done the right thing in telling you;
- 8.7.7 Indicate the action you will take and make it clear that you will have to tell the designated member of staff (no secrets);
- 8.7.8 If the child comes back to talk at a later stage s/he should be told that you cannot comment or advise as that might affect his/her security, but you can listen;
- 8.7.9 Remember these 'must not's':

- Do not drag the child to the designated person – this would be abusive in itself!
- Do not yourself contact the parents;
- Do not interrogate the child or ask leading questions;
- Do not speak to anyone about whom allegations are made, including colleagues;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Do not ask a child outright if s/he or others have suffered abuse;
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.

8.8 **TEN KEY POINTS TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT, OR ARE TOLD OF, ABUSE:**

The following guidelines, compiled by Dr Roger Morgan OBE (Children's Rights Director), may be helpful:

Adults looking after children or young people in schools (or in residential establishments or youth organisations) should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults or other young people), and take steps to reduce those risks. Adults (staff or volunteers) in charge of children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being physically or sexually abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. The following key points give a guide on what to do and not to do:

1. Always **stop and listen straight away** to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. If you can, **write brief notes** of what they are telling you while they are speaking (these may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said) – and keep your original notes, however rough and even if you wrote on the back of something else (it's what you wrote at the time that may be important later – not a tidier and improved version you wrote up afterwards!). If you don't have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards.
3. **Do not give a guarantee** that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – if you are told about abuse you have the responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it (see below). If asked, explain that if you are going to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
4. **Don't ask leading questions** that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. "did he do X to you?") – just ask "what do you want to tell me?" or "is there anything else you want to say".
5. Immediately tell the **Designated Person** (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abusing) – don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
6. Discuss with the Designated Person whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).

7. **Never attempt to carry out an investigation** of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc – social services and police staff are the people trained to do this – you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.
8. As soon as possible the Designated Person should refer the matter to the local social services department (helped by your notes). Follow their requests about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations, and can advise you.
9. **Never think abuse is impossible** in your school or group, or that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
10. Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults, about abuse – make sure that senior young people know how to behave if they suspect, or are told of abuse.

8.9 REPORTING PROCEDURE

A member of staff needs only reasonable cause for concern in order to act. One sentence from the child indicating abuse or non-accidental injury provides staff with reasonable grounds and is sufficient for them to act. This may also apply if clear information comes from a sibling or another adult.

However as many of the signs of child abuse are also commonly associated with other medical, social or psychological problems, a member of staff may naturally wish to discuss some initial concerns with other staff.

8.10 SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

Staff/helpers need to think and act sensibly to avoid situations that could lead to difficulties or embarrassment or accusations. The following points are intended to provide some guidance:

- 8.10.1 All staff must ensure that children feel equally valued; favouritism, real or inferred, causes feelings of alienation and can be misconstrued.
- 8.10.2 Staff should not take children out on their own and refrain from forming personal relationships exclusively with one individual.
- 8.10.3 Conversations and behaviour should be friendly but not over familiar. Young people are more comfortable with an adult in role than an adult who seeks to be 'one of the gang'.
- 8.10.4 Responsible and appropriate use of authority provides stability and security.
- 8.10.5 All children should be treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language use and actions.
- 8.10.6 Respect the privacy of the children
- 8.10.7 Avoid questionable activity e.g. rough, sexually provocative games and comments.

- 8.10.8 Make sure that the only people allowed into an activity are the adults assigned to the group. You should not allow others to have free access unless they have a specific reason e.g. guest speaker, maintenance person.
- 8.10.9 Physical contact should reflect the child's need not the adult's.
- 8.10.10 Physical contact should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child not the adult.
- 8.10.11 Physical contact should only take place in public.
- 8.10.12 Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- 8.10.12 Any act of restraint involving physical contact must be recorded in writing and the Headmaster notified. A record of such incidents will be kept.
- 8.10.13 Staff should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misunderstood.

More detailed information is available to all staff through the document '**Safe working practice for Adults working in the Social Care/Education Sector**'. Produced by Social Care Training the guidance identifies many key areas where adults can protect themselves from allegations.

9. COMPLIANCE

The School policy is regularly updated in order that we comply with new legislation and good practice. Currently the School's policy for Child Protection is consistent with, and so reinforces:

- 9.1 The Children Act 1989 (s17 & s27) & 2004;
- 9.2 The Education Act 2002 (s157);
- 9.3 Safeguarding Children in Education 2004;
- 9.4 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 [Updated 2010];
- 9.5 What to do if you're worried a Child is being abused 2006;
- 9.6 Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment In Education 2007;
- 9.7 Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards Regulations;
- 9.8 U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, which contends that all children have an inalienable right to protection from harm;
- 9.9 Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- 9.10 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 - Vetting and Barring;
- 9.11 The Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003

10. REVIEW OF POLICY

Reviewed: Summer Term 2011	Next revision due: Spring Term 2013
Reviewed by: DWTS / RHS	
Compiled by: RHS	



APPENDIX 1- USEFUL CONTACTS

Designated Officer	Mr Rob Searle r.searle@ranbyhouseschool.co.uk	01777 703138
Deputy Designated Person	Mrs Sarah Johns s.johns@ranbyhouseschool.co.uk	01777 703138
Designated Governors	Mrs Pauline Rouse Mrs Liz Lee	
Other staff to contact	Mr David Sibson (Head) Mr Chris Ward (Deputy Head)	Ext. 221 Ext. 246
Worksop College Designated Person	Mrs Liz Warner eaw@worksopcollege.notts.sch.uk	01909 537100
Bassetlaw Social Services (young people)	Chancery Lane Retford Nottinghamshire DN22 6DG	Tel: 01777 716161 fax: 01777 716171
Out of hours	Emergency Duty Team	0300 456 4546
Notts Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB)	Nottinghamshire County Council Children and Young People's Dept. County Hall West Bridgford Nottingham NG2 7QP	Tel: 0115 977 3935 Fax: 0115 977 4047
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk	0808 800 5000
NAPAC (National Association for those Abused in Childhood)	www.napac.org.uk	0800 085 3330
Police	Retford Police Station Worksop Police Station	01909 500 999 Ext 7464 0300 300 9999