

Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School

Policy Document

Academic Year 2011 -2012

Child Protection Policy

Designated Child Protection Officer: Stephanie McQuillan

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Review date February 2012

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This Policy has been written by the Child Protection Officer of Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School, in compliance with the following legislation:

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 3rd Edition 2007
Children's Act 2004
Every Child Matters
Education Act 2002

1. Duty of Care

This school recognises its duty of care, to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse. In line with the DCSF requirements as specified in the Early Years Foundation Stage regarding children's welfare, suitability of people working within the school and appropriate environments we are committed to:

- Take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Promoting the good health of the children, taking necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when they are ill
- Managing children's behaviour effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs
- Ensuring that adults looking after children, or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so through thorough records of evidence of identity
- Maintaining records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the school to meet the needs of the children
- Ensuring adults looking after children have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge
- Organising staffing arrangements to ensure safety and to meet the needs of the children
- Ensuring outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are safe and suitable for their purpose.
- Planning and organising our systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs

2. Introduction

RPPS fully recognises its duty of care to work with other agencies to protect children from harm and respond to abuse. Our policy applies to all members of staff who have access to children in the school - teaching and non-teaching, governors and volunteers.

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 blame. 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 or they may be withdrawn.

Children can be harmed in all sorts of circumstances including home, the local environment and school. In most instances the person causing the harm is well known to the child. High self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult are important in the prevention of the abuse of a child. We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, all school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. It is therefore important that the school:

- Maintains an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

- Ensures that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Supports children who have been abused, in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Includes opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Follows a policy of safe recruitment, checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers.
- Ensures all staff are familiar with the policy and follow procedures detailed in this document promptly when child abuse is suspected.
- Ensures head and all staff are trained in child protection, updated every 3 years and any part-time and voluntary staff who work with the children are made aware of the arrangements
- Designates a senior member of staff as Child Protection Officer (CPO) and deputy.
- Ensures that all staff who have access to children have very clear guidelines on how they should interact with children.
- Ensures the governing body undertakes an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged
- Corrects any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements without delay

The designated **CP officer** is Stephanie McQuillan, (*Head of Upper School –Pastoral*). Her role and the policy applies to all children within the RPPS setting; specifically **Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2**.

All staff should be alert to the possibility that a child may be being abused and to know what to do should they be concerned about a child's welfare. This abuse, which may be emotional, physical, sexual, neglect or bullying (see *types of abuse* below), may manifest itself in unusual and worrying patterns of behaviour and/or visible signs of injuries.

Recognising or suspecting that a child is being abused may be stressful and upsetting. It is easy for people to believe that it couldn't happen to children for whom they care. In all cases staff must air their concerns with the CPO, no matter how minor they seem to be.

Our policy is to report all cases, where the well-being of a child is threatened, to the relevant local authority Social Services Department or local police force and to log this information in the Child Protection File.

All staff must be familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential, written record of any incidents and with the requirements of the local Area Child Protection Committee.

3. Setting the context

All those who come into contact with children have a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. Pupils' worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

A child who seeks help from a member of staff must be given assurance that their worries and fears will be taken seriously. However it must also be made clear to the child that, whilst the adult will respect their confidence, the matter cannot be treated as a 'secret' kept between them as it may be necessary to call on the help of others.

Before explaining the action a member of staff should take on receiving information that leads them to be worried about a child, it is helpful to understand the following:

- Definition of child abuse
- Significant harm
- Child in need

- How children can be abused
- Signs and indicators of possible abuse

Once this is understood we can then set about explaining the following:

- How abuse and neglect or possible abuse and neglect may come to the attention of staff
- What action staff should take
- What happens next
- Confidentiality

4. Definition of child abuse

Child Abuse refers to actual or likely significant harm to a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

5. Significant harm

Some children are in need because they are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. The Local Authority is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (s47 of the Children Act 1989)

6. Child in need

Children who are defined as being 'in need', under the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (s17[10]) of the Children Act 1989).

The critical factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are what will happen to a child's health or development without services, and the likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development.

7. How children can be abused

Children may be abused through:

- Physical violence
- Sexual exploitation
- Neglect, not being provided with the basic things needed for children to thrive
- Emotional - being made to feel unwanted, ugly, worthless, guilty or unloved
- Bullying. (which may involve any of the above)
- Exposure to domestic violence

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

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. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Bullying is the willful desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone and takes the form of varying levels of physical or verbal abuse which can be very subtle, although no less hurtful or damaging, such as exclusion from the group. Name calling and taunting can include both racial and sexual harassment.

Domestic Violence Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional wellbeing. A child may suffer a blow during episodes of violence. A child may be greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent. This could lead to serious anxiety or distress.

8. Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse

The recognition that a child may be being abused can be very difficult. Abuse, or possible abuse may come to the attention of staff through the following indicators:

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Extreme mood swings
- Depression and withdrawal
- Lethargy, unwillingness to be involved
- Unwillingness to communicate
- Physical signs, such as an injury which arouses cause for concern
- The child telling someone about the abuse

All of the above indicators should be viewed in the light of the child's usual behaviour or demeanour, especially where a number of factors have occurred over time. It is important to get to know the children well so that you can recognise when something is out of the ordinary.

9. What action should staff take?

Remember it is not your responsibility to decide if a child has been abused. However, it is your duty to act on your concerns by referring them on. Some of the biggest failures in protecting children from abuse have occurred through omission rather than commission. When in doubt, ask.

It is our policy to refer all cases where the well-being of a child is threatened without any discussion or agreement with the child's parent.

Staff who have concerns that a child is at risk **MUST** report them to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay. Such discussion and agreement must not place a child at increased risk of significant harm.

We have two different routes of action depending on who the adult is, that the allegation is made against.

A. If a child has made an allegation or you have concerns that a child may be at risk from another member of staff:

1. Report them to Head (or Company Director with responsibility for Child Protection Issues: Theo Brehony, if Head not available) and the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay. Do not mention this to anyone else.
2. Complete the Child Protection (CP) form.
3. Tell the informant (if appropriate) that you will be passing this information on to people who can help.
4. Don't make any promises. If the informant asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. You will have to tell someone.
5. An allegation may lead to a criminal investigation. **Do not** do anything that could jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking the young person **leading questions** or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.
6. Let the informant tell you as much as they want to without interruptions. Empathetic listening will assist in clarifying and eliciting information. Make full notes on the CP form, and ask them if they have told anyone else.
7. Keep all forms/evidence secure whilst being completed, including any notes you may have made in rough.
8. Pass all documentation to the CPO as soon as possible.
9. **Take No Further Action** unless requested by the CPO.

NB: If an accusation is made against the Child Protection Officer, you must raise your concerns with the Deputy CPO in the first instance.

B. If the concern is that a child may be at risk from another adult:

1. Report them to the Class Teacher and the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay.
2. Complete the Child Protection (CP) form.
3. Tell the informant (if appropriate) that you will be passing this information on to people who can help.
4. Don't make any promises. If the informant asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. You will have to tell someone.
5. An allegation may lead to a criminal investigation. **Do not** do anything that could jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking the young person **leading questions** or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.
6. Let the informant tell you as much as they want to without interruptions. Empathetic listening will assist in clarifying and eliciting information. Make full notes on the CP form, and ask them if they have told anyone else.
7. Keep all forms/evidence secure whilst being completed, including any notes you may have made in rough.
8. Pass all documentation to the CPO as soon as possible.
9. **Take No Further Action** unless requested by the CPO.

How we listen to children

It may be that you have concerns about a child through your own observations or it may be a situation where a child comes to you as a 'friendly adult' to whom they can talk.

In either situation, it is vital that the child feels able to speak freely. To try and encourage the 'right atmosphere' it will help to consider the following:

- Establish a rapport (this may well have already taken place if the child has come to you, but in the situation where you are approaching the child, it will help them if you can try and put them at their ease as much as possible).
- Find a time and place where there will be no interruptions.
- Let them know this will be a friendly enquiry rather than an investigation.

- You must be non-judgemental, whatever you are told.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing.
- You should be 80% listening and 20% talking.
- Your body language should be non-threatening. Use a relaxed, but concerned pose and expression. **AVOID PHYSICAL CONTACT UNLESS YOU ASK PERMISSION OF THE CHILD.**
- Act on the information a child gives you, but not alone.

NB: If an accusation is made against the CPO, you must raise your concerns with the Deputy CPO initially. The names and contact details of the current CPO and Deputy are in the Appendix.

10. What happens next?

On receiving the concerns of the member of staff, the CPO will:

- clarify the issues with the member(s) of staff raising the concerns
- refer to the headmaster for staff allegations or deputy CPO for other allegations
- contact Social Services for advice or referral within 24 hours.

Having received information about your concerns/referral, the local authority Social Services will decide within 24 hours what further action should be taken and inform the school of their decision.

Social Services, within the framework for the Assessment of Children in Need, will make an initial assessment as to whether this is a Child in Need (s17[10]) or a Child in Need of Protection (s47) and dependent on the seriousness of the situation this may involve the police. The purpose of the consultation with the police is to discuss details of the referral and make a joint decision about what needs to be done and how quickly.

Remember that the protection of children from abuse must have first priority and even if your cause for concern or that of someone else proves to be unfounded, your action is justifiable if based on concern for the child's safety.

Once you have reported your concerns the decision about what further action should be taken, if any, is the responsibility of the local authority Social Services Department.

11. Keeping Records (Confidentiality)

Information about child protection concerns in relation to a child is confidential. Staff should make sure any written information is lodged securely in a safe place with the Child Protection Officer. Never talk about the child's background except with those professionals involved. **NO RECORDS MUST BE KEPT ON THE SCHOOL INTRANET.**

Sharing of information between agencies should be done in accordance with protocols in existence in relation to the Data Protection Act 1999.

However, the law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children in the public interest; that is, the public interest in child protection may override the public interest in maintaining confidentiality. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case and legal advice should be sought in cases of doubt.

A Child Protection Action Flowchart guidelines can be found in Appendix.

12. The Responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer are to:

- undertake a risk assessment of the school site to minimize risk of physical injury and to identify areas which may be considered 'problem places' (unsupervised areas, toilets, hidden corners etc.)
- liaise with the health and safety Committee to ensure a secure and safe physical environment for the children.
- produce an effective, compliant Child Protection Policy and ensure staff are familiar with the contents
- provide clear guidance to all staff (especially new ones) on all child protection issues
- induct all staff (especially new ones) on the procedures for dealing with concerns regarding suspected abuse/bullying so that they understand their responsibilities; are alert to the signs of abuse; know the reporting procedures and referral process
- provide and maintain secure, confidential records of any concerns logged on a Child Protection form and any associated evidence
- keep a 'Welfare Log' where staff may record concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour towards them by children
- regular reviews of cases that have been raised
- undertake regular inter-agency training every 2 years
- ensure all staff have basic training in child protection
- maintain links with other professionals bodies and have a clear understanding of the Local Authority referral procedures

13. Contact with children in school

Many adults will be involved with pupils during the course of the school year. These will include the full and part time teaching staff, peripatetic teachers, teaching assistants, administrative and maintenance staff (including secretaries, cleaners, caretakers etc.), volunteers (parent readers etc.), governors, invited guests and speakers.

It is important that such adults recognise they can be in a vulnerable position with regard to their relationship with the children. To safeguard the welfare of staff and volunteers and to avoid misunderstandings, the following Code of Practice has been devised.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUPILS

- Physical Contact - children do not always want to be touched, but when physical contact is necessary (first-aid administration, sports coaching, practical guidance in lessons, peripatetic music teaching for example), ask permission to touch the child. Remember, touch must be for the child's benefit.
- Where physical restraint is needed, use no more than is necessary to avoid harm to any of the parties involved.
- Avoid being alone with a pupil in a secluded place. Should a pupil need to be spoken to in confidence, a room with a windowed door should be used and a colleague informed of the intended interview. (Parent volunteers must not be placed in a position where they are alone with a child, they should always be in a public area of the school.)
- Always avoid being alone with a child changing for sports.
- Avoid becoming personally involved with pupils and their families on extra-curricular activities. This could lead to accusations of favouritism or undue pressure being applied by the family.

- Document uncomfortable situations that may be misinterpreted (eg. letters of 'adoration' from pupil to teacher, inappropriate conversations) in the Welfare log (What? Where? When? Who?) and inform your Section Head and/or the CPO.
- Always share concerns about pupils. DO NOT KEEP SECRETS. Again, inform the CPO and enter details in the Welfare Log.
- Transporting pupils in staff cars is not advised under any circumstances.
- Pupils should not be given personal information about staff.
- Discourage the use of nicknames and teacher's first names.
- Email and text messages between staff and pupils is inadvisable.
- Gifts should be given fairly and equally, without preference.
- Avoid speaking critically to pupils about staff.
- Always maintain a professional manner. Avoid teasing, favouritism and losing one's temper.

14. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (Whistleblowing)

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the SLT or relevant agencies. Although it can be difficult, this is important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong, but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings are natural, but they must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember, it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted and they need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Reasons for whistle blowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistle blowing

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

- Voice concerns, suspicions as soon as you feel you can.
- The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Approach your immediate manager, Headmaster, or the Child Protection Officer.
- If your concern is about your immediate manager/Headmaster, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school, contact the Local Education Officer for your area.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest.
- Ideally, put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A staff member is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but they will need to show sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 allows individuals to disclose certain issues to particular external parties where there is good reason to believe that internal disclosure will not be taken seriously or will cause the individual making the disclosure to be penalised in some way. It is recognised that whistle blowing can be stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, union or Teacher Governor.

15. Appointing staff

It is important that thorough checks are made on anybody who will be working at RPPS both to prevent unsuitable people from gaining access to children and to maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.

The Department for Education and Skills has issued guidance on preventing unsuitable people from working with children which details the pre-appointment checks that should be made on all people who will have contact with young children. For anyone seeking further information, a copy of this guidance is available in the Child protection file kept in the CPO's office. To ensure safer, stringent staff recruitment, RPPS will action the following before a candidate takes up a position:

- **Identity** – proof of identity should be supplied in the form of a passport or similar official documentation with picture.
- **Academic Qualifications** – verification of qualifications should be done by looking at relevant certificates or diplomas, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding institution. If original documents are not available, a properly certified copy must be produced.
- **Professional and Character References** – these should always be taken up and directly with the referee. It is not good practice to rely solely on testimonials provided by the candidate or on employers who are not the most recent or current.
- **Previous Employment History** – Always obtain satisfactory explanation for gaps in employment history. If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, a check with the school at which they were most recently employed should confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving.
- **Criminal Record Check** – enhanced CRB checks should be carried out. Existing checks will only be accepted, as a temporary measure, if they are a year or less in date and the candidate has worked with children in the last 3 months.
- **List 99** – this is a confidential list providing information on all people whose employment has been restricted or barred by the Secretary of State. CRB Disclosure of a person's suitability to work with children will contain details of whether they are included on List 99 and/or the Protection of Children Act List (maintained by the Department of Health).
- **Health** – Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children should be medically fit.
- **CP Interviewer** – as from April 2006, a trained child protection interviewer, who will take a written record of the interview, will be required on an interview panel.

From 12th October 2009

A new vetting and barring Scheme 'goes live' from 12th October 2009 through the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The Scheme will reform current vetting and barring practices, but as a school we will retain the responsibility for ensuring safe recruitment and employment practices.

From this date the Scheme will replace the CRB and the List 99 checks, mentioned above. RPPS will check that the candidate is registered with the ISA and is not 'barred' from contact with children. If a candidate is not registered the Scheme will notify us that either the person is 1. Not applied; 2. Voluntarily withdrawn; 3. BARRED.

The Scheme will constantly be updating the status of individuals on receipt of new information, such as new convictions or referrals from employers. As a school we will be notified, due to registering an interest, if the status of one of our employees has changed.

All school workers, paid and unpaid, that come into contact with children will need to be registered. This included parents, governors and any other voluntary adults.

16. Dealing With Allegations Of Abuse Against Staff

It is imperative that all who deal with allegations made against a teacher, other member of staff or volunteer maintains an open and inquiring mind, and takes the allegations seriously. They must be dealt fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child but also supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The rights of the child and member of staff must be considered. However, where there exists a conflict of interest between the adult and the child, then the child's interests must be paramount as required by the Children Act 1989.

On the 21st November 2004, new guidelines were issued on dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff. Below is a summary of the main points for schools.

Allegation made to school

Where an allegation is made to a member of staff it should be reported to the Headmaster immediately unless the allegation is about the Head, in which case it should be reported to the Company Director with responsibility for Child Protection Issues: Theo Brehony.

If the allegation meets any of the following criteria the Headmaster should report it to the local authority (LA) designated officer the same day:

- a member of staff has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- a member of staff has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- a member of staff has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children.

Initial consideration

The LA designated officer will discuss the matter with the Headmaster and obtain further details of the allegation and circumstances in which it was made. The head should not investigate the allegation at this stage. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence /information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the LA designated officer will immediately refer to children's social care and ask for a strategy discussion in accordance with *Working Together* to be convened straight away.

In those circumstances the strategy discussion should include the LA designated officer and the Headmaster.

If there is not cause to suspect that 'significant harm' is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the LA designated officer should immediately inform the police and convene a similar

discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion should also involve the school and any other agencies involved with the child.

Action following initial consideration

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, it will be for the employer to deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headmaster should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action, the Headmaster and the school personnel adviser should discuss who will undertake that with the LA designated officer: In some settings and circumstances it may be appropriate for the disciplinary investigation to be conducted by a person who is independent of the school. In any case the investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the employer within 10 working days.

On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation, the Headmaster and the Company Director with responsibility for Child Protection Issues: Theo Brehony, should consult the LA designated officer within two working days to decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed. If such a hearing is needed it should be held within 15 working days.

Where children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, the head and chair of governors should take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action. The LA designated officer should continue to liaise with the school to monitor progress of the case and provide advice/support when required/requested.

Case subject to police investigation

If a criminal investigation is required, the police will aim to complete their enquiries as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation and will keep the progress of the case under review. A target date for case review should be set. The review will include the progress of the investigation and consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Wherever possible, that review should take place no later than four weeks after the initial action meeting and, if the decision is to continue to investigate the allegation, a date for a subsequent review should be set at that point. (It is open to the police to consult the CPS about the evidence that will need to be obtained in order to charge a person with an offence at any stage.)

If the police and/or CPS decide not to charge the individual with an offence, or decide to administer a caution, or the person is acquitted by a court, the police should wherever possible aim to pass all information they have which may be relevant to a disciplinary case to the employer within three working days of the decision. In those circumstances the employer and the LA designated officer should decide how to proceed. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headmaster should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days. In any case in which children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case should also be passed to the school. If the person is convicted of an offence the police must inform the employer straight away so that appropriate action can be taken.

Referral to DfES

If on conclusion of the case the school ceases to use the person's services, or they ceases to provide their services, the school should consult the LA officer about whether a referral to DfES is required. If this is appropriate the report should be made within one month.

Please note this summary is only a basic outline of the DfES guidelines, a complete copy of which is available in The CPO's office. A flow chart outlining the process can also be found in the Appendix.

17. Use of Photography and Photographs Policy

At RPPS we encourage the use of photography to celebrate and record most aspects of our school life. During their years at the school, the children may be photographed using still cameras or video/DVD equipment. Whilst it is impossible to outline every single occasion when a child may be photographed, listed below are the many instances when photography is likely to take place:

- **School Publicity** - pictures for the school prospectus or advertising leaflets.
- **Press Releases** - those occasions when we like to share our activities/events with the wider community, such as opening a new building, pupils winning external competitions/sporting events.
- **Performance** - school plays, concerts and assemblies.
- **Celebrating Achievement** - pupils who have gained particular accolades in school for a variety of reasons for example, sport, music, setting a good example and in-house competitions and sports fixtures.
- **Academic Record Keeping** - evidence of elements of the curriculum which cannot be kept as a written record, such as practical work in Science or Art.
- **School Database** - to keep a record of what each child looks like.
- **Education** - photography is increasingly used in lessons as an important tool. In this instance children, or the teachers, may well take pictures of each other.
- **School events** - any special events involving the whole school such as Sports Day, Red Nose Day, Book Week and many others.
- **Displays** - to reinforce any aspect of school life including work in class trips to educational institutes, as well as any of the above.
- **Health and Safety** - pictures of children who have allergies, foods they are not allowed to eat are posted in the dining room, staff room and school office.
- **Formal** - whole school and individual photographs.

Photography is a very important aspect of any school life and should be positively encouraged in its many forms. As a school, we are conscious of our responsibility to be circumspect in the way we use such photography and we encourage our parents to support us in this. However, if any parent would prefer not to have their child's photograph used for any publicity purposes, they should inform the school in writing.

WRITTEN BY: Child Protection Officer of Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School

DATE: June 2009

READ & APPROVED BY: Managing Director of London Preparatory Schools

READ & SHARED: with all staff & parent helpers at Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School

This policy is reviewed annually by the Designated CP Officer & Managing Director then passed to the Head who takes it to the next Board Meeting.

This policy is made available to parents on the school website and a paper copy is available in the school office upon request. It is available to all staff through the school intranet.

RPPS Child Protection Policy Appendices

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New Process For Allegations Made To School Against Staff

Child Protection Officer – Stephanie McQuillan

Deputy Child Protection Officer – Anne Lloyd

Company Director with responsibility for Child Protection Issues: Theo Brehony

RPPS Child Protection Staff Guidelines

Child Abuse refers to actual or likely significant harm to a young person under the age of 18 years - i.e. those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach/maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired without intervention.

TYPES OF ABUSE:

Physical abuse - actions that cause physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

Sexual abuse - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Neglect - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs resulting in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Emotional abuse - persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Bullying is the willful desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone and takes the form of varying levels of physical or verbal abuse which can be very subtle, although no less hurtful or damaging, such as exclusion from the group.

Domestic Violence Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional wellbeing. A child may suffer a blow during episodes of violence. A child may be greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent. This could lead to serious anxiety or distress.

RECOGNITION - can be very difficult. Indicators are:

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Extreme mood swings
- Depression and withdrawal
- Lethargy, unwillingness to be involved
- Unwillingness to communicate
- Physical signs, such as an injury which arouses cause for concern
- The child telling someone about the abuse
- A child is suddenly or frequently absent for no specific reason

These should be viewed in the light of the child's usual behaviour or demeanour. Get to know the children well so that you can recognise when something is out of the ordinary.

ACTION - Always refer concerns on, even if you are not sure.

REMEMBER - IF IN DOUBT SEEK ADVICE FROM THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER.

This may be quite alarming for the member of staff to hear. It is therefore important that you remain as calm as possible; remember it is equally as distressing for the young person who may be telling their story for the very first time.

We have two different routes of action depending on who the adult is, that the allegation is made against.

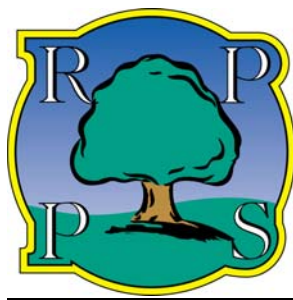
A. If a child has made an allegation or you have concerns that a child may be at risk from another member of staff:

1. Report them to Head (or Company Director with responsibility for Child Protection Issues: Theo Brehony, if Head not available) and the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay. Do not mention this to anyone else.
2. Complete the Child Protection (CP) form.
3. Tell the informant (if appropriate) that you will be passing this information on to people who can help.
4. What a child says may be quite alarming for you to hear. It is important that you remain as calm as possible; remember it is equally as distressing for the young person who may be telling their story for the first time.
5. Don't make any promises. If the informant asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. You will have to tell someone.
6. An allegation may lead to a criminal investigation. **Do not** do anything that could jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking the young person **leading questions** or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.
7. Let the informant tell you as much as they want to without interruptions. Empathetic listening will assist in clarifying and eliciting information. Make full notes on the CP form, and ask them if they have told anyone else.
8. Keep all forms/evidence secure whilst being completed, including any notes you may have made in rough.
9. Pass all documentation to the CPO as soon as possible.
10. **Take No Further Action** unless requested by the CPO.

NB: If an accusation is made against the Child Protection Officer, you must raise your concerns with the Deputy CPO in the first instance.

B. If the concern is that a child may be at risk from another adult:

1. Report them to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay.
2. Complete the Child Protection (CP) form.
3. Tell the informant (if appropriate) that you will be passing this information on to people who can help.
4. What a child says may be quite alarming for you to hear. It is important that you remain as calm as possible; remember it is equally as distressing for the young person who may be telling their story for the first time.
5. Don't make any promises. If the informant asks you to keep it a secret, be very clear that in order for you to be able to help you cannot keep any information a secret. You will have to tell someone.
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9. Pass all documentation to the CPO as soon as possible.
10. **Take No Further Action** unless requested by the CPO.



Safer Child Protection Agreement 11 - 12

Please read the attached copy of our Child Protection Policy and sign agreement to guidelines below to ensure consistency of behaviour toward children in our school:

- Do not have undue physical contact with a child. Should a child be hurt or in distress use 'common sense' in your physical contact. Be sympathetic and caring but do not invite or have unnecessary or prolonged physical contact.
- Never at any time have 'secrets' with a child. If preparing a mother's day card, for example, tell the child it is a surprise for mummy, not a 'secret' to be kept between you.
- If a child needs to be undressed in the case of an 'accident' or an injury requiring further inspection, the child should be encouraged to undress them self, if possible in privacy. Do not stay with an undressed child, alone in a closed room; leave the door open or ajar and stand with your back to the child while they are changing, if possible asking another adult to assist so you are not alone.
- On no account should private contact be made with a child via, for example email, letter or phone without the parent's knowledge and consent. If it is unavoidable, please cc the parents and a member of SLT.
- If you are concerned at any time about a child for whatever reason, or the behaviour of a member of staff, tell the Child Protection Officer immediately. You are not expected to make any judgements, but it is your responsibility to alert the C.P.O. of any concerns you may have.

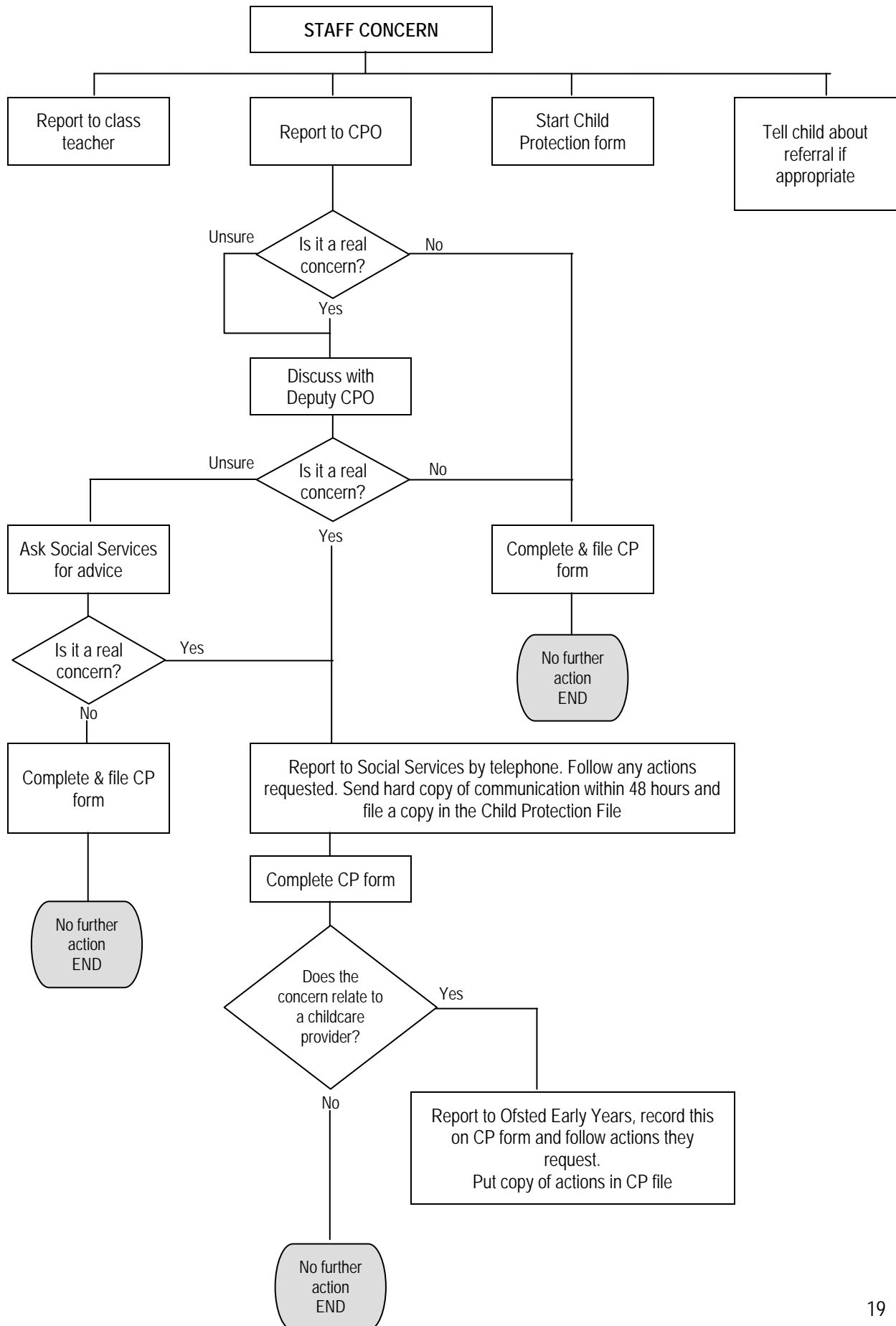
I _____ in my capacity as _____

have read and understood the Child Protection Policy and agree to follow the above guidelines at Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School .

Signed: _____ Date: _____
To be filed in staff/parent file.



RPPS Child Protection Action Flowchart





RPPS Child Protection Recording Form



Member of staff		Form completion date	
Name, address, date of birth of child concern relates to			
Name, address and telephone number of person reporting concern			
Summary of conversation and/or nature of concern specific to reporter			
Date, time and situation of concern received or witnessed			
Action			
Social Services Referral		Ofsted Referral	No Referral (No further action needed)
Reason			
Parents informed?	Date	Details of discussion	
Staff signature	Date	CPO's signature	Date
Issue reported to SLT	Date	Members of SLT	

