

## CHARTERHOUSE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### A Statement of Intent

*Charterhouse is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all its pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment. Charterhouse takes seriously its responsibility to protect its pupils from bullying and abuse. Pupils who have information about possible abuse are encouraged to tell a responsible adult – their Housemaster, Matron or Tutor, the Master of the Yearlings, a Chaplain, a Doctor, a Counsellor, or a Child Protection Officer.*

### All members of staff should familiarise themselves with Sections 1-3

#### 1 AIMS

The central aim of the following procedures is to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils in line with the requirements of the Children Act (1989), the Education Act (2002) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2006). Charterhouse aims to:

1. Seek to create and maintain a safe environment for children;
2. Work to help children to understand what is acceptable behaviour;
3. Teach children to speak up if they believe they or others are not being treated appropriately;
4. Teach children how to stay away from harm;
5. Protect and support any child who has been subject to abuse;
6. Ensure all staff employed at the school who have access to children understand their responsibility to be alert to signs of child abuse and to refer any concerns to the designated child protection officers;
7. Develop effective links with relevant agencies for child protection and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters.

#### 2 PERSONNEL

##### *Designated Child Protection Officer*

*Mr A G Johnson*                      07766 756867 (leave a message)

##### *Deputy Child Protection Officer*

*Mrs M H Swift*                      01483 291630 or  
07766 756867 (leave a message)

##### *The Headmaster*

*The Revd J S Witheridge*        01483 291600 (Office) 01483 291700 (Home)

##### *The Bursar*

*Mr D A E Williams*                01483 291602 (Office) 01483 422750 (Home)

**Designated School Governor**

Lady Toulson

Phone Number available from the Deputy Headmaster

**3 SUMMARY OF PROCEDURE FOR ADULT MEMBERS OF THE CHARTERHOUSE COMMUNITY**

In order for each adult member of the Charterhouse community to respond appropriately to matters relating to suspected, alleged or actual child abuse (*for a definition of child abuse see Appendix 1*), there exist a variety of avenues by which to proceed. The appropriate avenue to choose will depend upon against whom the allegation is being made. The table below outlines appropriate responses:

Level of suspicion/knowledge	Appropriate response
(1) Having <b>suspicions</b> about child abuse:	<b>Report</b> these to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
(2) Having <b>received a report</b> or <b>evidence</b> of child abuse:	<b>Report</b> this to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
If any of the above involve a member of the teaching staff at Charterhouse:	<b>Report</b> this to the Headmaster.
If any of the above involve a member of the support staff at Charterhouse:	<b>Report</b> this to the Bursar
If any of the above involves the Headmaster:	<b>Report</b> this to the designated School Governor.

No member of the school staff shall conduct any **investigation** concerning child abuse or decide whether a child has been abused. This is done by specialist Agencies. Furthermore if a member of staff receives information about an alleged abuse they must not promise to keep it secret, but must tell the person involved that it will be passed on to either the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Headmaster. They should reassure the pupil that they will not get into trouble for passing on this information.

All members of the school staff should make detailed notes whenever a matter of suspected, alleged or actual child abuse is being discussed as soon after the event as possible (but not during it) and should note carefully the time and date. They must be careful not to ask any leading questions but should merely note the facts. The Social Services Department and/or the Police and/or the Courts may require these.

All members of the school staff must observe the rules of confidentiality (see Appendix 3) and must not discuss a matter of suspected, alleged or actual child abuse with anyone other than those responsible for child protection issues and any other person(s) who need to know.

## 4 EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

Child protection issues at Charterhouse are addressed through the curriculum as appropriate. We also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. In the Fourths, bullying is addressed by the Master in Charge of Yearlings. All pupils are encouraged to show respect to others and to take responsibility for protecting themselves. Parents are expected to help pupils behave in non-violent and non-abusive ways. Training in child protection issues is provided for all staff (academic and support) who have close and regular contact with pupils. Charterhouse makes stringent background checks (enhanced CRB) regarding all child protection matters on any person appointed to the staff and is currently organising training for some members of the senior management team on the procedure for interviewing in line with the government's recommendations (March 2006).

## 5 CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 *The Governing Body* has the legal responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children under the 2002 Education Act. The Governing Body will **ensure that**:

- The School has a child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and the policy is made available to parents on request or via the School's website;
- The School operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff (both full and part-time) who will work with pupils, including Criminal Record Bureau and List 99 checks;
- A senior member of the School's Management Team structure is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues and liaising with other agencies where necessary;
- The designated Child Protection Officer(s) undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards set by, the Area Child Protection Committee, and refresher training at 2-yearly intervals to keep their knowledge and skills up to date;
- The Headmaster and all other staff who work with children undertake training that equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their responsibilities for child protection that is kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals, and temporary and part-time staff who work with children are made aware of the School's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities;
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements are remedied without delay;
- They undertake an annual review of the School's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, and how the above duties have been discharged.

5.2 *The Headmaster* has a legal duty to ensure that procedures exist to ensure the proper protection of children at Charterhouse and to deal efficiently with any suspicions of abuse. He will:

- Ensure that the procedures of the Child Protection Policy accord with the requirements of the law;
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff and pupils;
- Appoint a designated Child Protection Officer to coordinate action within the School and liaise with relevant agencies;
- Ensure that the designated person receives appropriate training and support;
- Ensure that all staff are alert to the signs of possible child abuse and know what to do if they have concerns or suspicions;
- Report annually to the Governing Body on child protection issues.

5.3 *The Designated Child Protection Officer(s)* will be responsible for:

- Suggesting amendments to and updating of the Child Protection Policy;
- Day-to-day management of the Policy and associated procedures;
- Acting as a source of advice and co-ordinating action within the School over suspected cases of abuse;
- Liaison with relevant Agencies;
- Keeping detailed and accurate records of concerns about child protection issues;
- Making an annual report to the Headmaster on child protection issues.

5.4 *Housemasters* will:

- Ensure that all their House staff are alert to signs of possible child abuse and know what to do if they have any suspicions or concerns;
- Encourage pupils within their Houses to tell someone if they are being abused, or know of a pupil who is being subject to abuse

5.5 *The Assistant Headmaster Pastoral* will:

- Liaise with Housemasters about issues relating to child protection and bullying, both in formal meetings and in his visits to Houses;
- Raise, where necessary, issues relating to child protection and bullying with the School Monitors at their weekly meeting;
- Oversee the conduct of occasional year group pupil questionnaires on the subject of bullying and impart the findings to the Management Team, Housemasters and other interested parties.

5.6 *The Master of the Yearlings* will:

- Conduct an induction course on matters relating to bullying with all the Yearlings, in House groups, during their first Quarter in the School.

5.7 *The Bursar* will:

- Ensure that the School's support staff who come into contact with children are alert to the signs of abuse and know what to do if they have any suspicions.

## 6 RESPONSIBILITIES UPON RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

6.1 *The Designated Child Protection Officer* will:

- Read, sign and date notes regarding the disclosure/allegation or report of suspected child abuse;
- Warn the person making the disclosure/allegation that they must not discuss this matter with anyone else;
- Collate information already known relating to both the person who has made the disclosure/allegation and the other people mentioned in it to inform their consideration of the allegation (this stage in the procedure is not investigative);
- Discuss the disclosure/allegation with the Headmaster in order to “obtain, as far as possible, a fair and balanced picture” but not to prove or disprove an allegation (NEOST guidance);
- If the disclosure/allegation makes reference to a member of staff, assess whether it constitutes an ‘allegation’ or a ‘complaint’;
- An ‘allegation’ has been made if the information suggests that actions *have* hurt or harmed a child or *may* hurt or harm a child in a way that constitutes abuse;
- If the disclosure/allegation falls into the category of a ‘complaint’, then the School’s complaints procedure will be followed;
- Determine whether or not there are clear and demonstrable reasons to think that the allegation is without foundation;
- In all cases, seek advice from the Social Services Department. When the allegation is made concerning a pupil, seek advice from the Contact Centre at Kingston-upon-Thames (08456 009009); when the allegation is made concerning a member of staff, seek advice from the School Liaison Office (01372 833341).

He/she will then discuss the way forward with the Headmaster by assessing if there is:

1. A possibility that significant harm to a child has taken place or may take place;
2. A possibility that a criminal offence involving a child has taken place or may take place;
3. A probability that the disclosure/allegation relates to the use of reasonable force to restrain a pupil by a member of staff;
4. A probability that the disclosure/allegation indicates ‘inappropriate behaviour’ or ‘poor practice’ by a member of staff but that this behaviour does not constitute child abuse
5. A clear and demonstrable reason to think that the disclosure/allegation constitutes an allegation without foundation.

In the event that a disclosure of abuse is made indicating some involvement of the Headmaster, the Designated Child Protection Officer should report the matter to the Designated School Governor. Their contact details may be obtained from the Deputy Headmaster.

6.2 *The Headmaster will:*

- Consider suspending an employee of the School if it seems possible that they have been involved in abuse that entails significant harm to a child, or if a criminal offence involving a child has been committed;
- Take action to isolate pupils who may have been the target of abuse (for their safety) or pupils who may have abused others (for the safety of others);
- Formally refer a case to the Social Services Department within 24 hours (and confirm it in writing) if it is:
  - (i) Thought possible that significant harm to a child has taken place or may take place;
  - (ii) Thought possible that a criminal offence involving a child has taken place or may take place;
  - (iii) Requested by the Social Services Department during the seeking of advice (see 6.1 above).

**7 TRAINING**

***Brooke Hall***

- (1) Annually (Brooke Hall meeting at the start of OQ), Designated Child protection Officer [and Deputy] to make their presence known to new members of Brooke Hall and to remind all members of Brooke Hall of the School's Child Protection policy.
- (2) Brooke Hall training will take place every three years.

***Support Staff***

- (1) Annually (Support Staff meeting at the start of OQ), Designated Child protection Officer [and Deputy] to make their presence known to new members of the support staff and to remind all support staff of the School's Child Protection policy.
- (2) Housemasters, with the assistance of the House matron, to enhance training of support staff in their house (Relief Matron and house cleaners).

## APPENDIX 1

### **Types of Child Abuse**

The basis of all child abuse is the failure to recognise a child's basic needs and respond to them. Child abuse may take the form of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

**Physical Abuse:** Intentional actions which result in the child sustaining physical injuries (e.g. bruises, bite marks, burns, scratch marks and broken or sprained limbs). The child may be unwilling to become involved in games (especially swimming) and may wear clothing covering the limbs even in hot weather.

**Emotional Abuse:** Intentional actions which result in a child sustaining emotional distress or damage (e.g. persistent rejection, gross inconsistency in relationships that inhibits the child's developing understanding of appropriate behaviour). The child may exhibit difficult or disturbed behaviour, or may seek adult attention and / or comfort (e.g. inventing reasons to join in adult conversation rather than join in with their peers). The child may compensate by over-eating or drinking.

**Sexual Abuse:** Involving immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent. They may show sudden changes in mood or behaviour, knowledge of sexual matters in advance of their years, a marked lack of trust in adults, or an inability to maintain stable relationships with their peers. They may wish to disguise their attractiveness by, for example, over-eating or cutting their hair very short.

**Neglect:** Omitting to care for the child in a way that is liable to impair the child's health or physical / emotional development. Signs of neglect include infrequent visits home and no apparent contact from home.

### **General signs of child abuse**

These include:

- Disobedience, attention-seeking or aimless behaviour
- Anti-social behaviour
- Hysterical attacks or sudden/violent changes in mood
- Misuse of alcohol or other drugs
- Changes in eating patterns
- Severe sleep disturbance with vivid dreams or nightmares
- Inability to concentrate, or sudden drop in academic performance
- Social isolation
- Self-mutilation
- Talk of or attempts at suicide

## APPENDIX 2

### WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Headmaster, or the designated School Governor. Although this can be difficult this is particularly 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, however natural, must never result in a child continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember, it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

*Don't think what if I'm wrong – think what if I'm right*

#### Reasons for whistle-blowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice of 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.
- Fear of getting it wrong.
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
- Fear of not being believed.

#### How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness 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 the Headmaster (or Bursar if it concerns Support Staff) with your concern.
- If your concern is about the Headmaster, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the School, contact the designated School Governor.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest.
- Ideally, you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and

history, giving names, dates and places where you can.

- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate 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.

### **Self-Reporting**

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

### **Further Advice and Support**

It is recognised that whistle-blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from the School's Designated Child Protection Officer, members of the Management Team and/or your professional or trade union.

## APPENDIX 3

### GUIDANCE ON CONFIDENTIALITY<sup>1</sup>

#### 1 DEFINITION AND PRINCIPLES:

**Confidentiality is the means by which the personal and private lives of pupils remain appropriately private.** The school's policy on confidentiality is based on the principle that pupils have a moral right to have information about their personal and private lives treated respectfully, and that staff have a duty to respect this right. Staff should, however, be aware of the difference between personal facts naturally known in the public domain of the school, and those facts that are of a personal and private nature.

#### 2 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

Members of staff have certain responsibilities regarding confidentiality. First, when dealing with pupils, they should make their own personal boundaries of confidentiality as clear as possible. Secondly, they should not knowingly invite confidences which they later feel obliged to divulge. Thirdly, they should be aware that there is a statutory requirement to report information about such matters as child abuse and the risk of serious self-harm using the appropriate channels. (See Charterhouse Child Protection Policy.)

#### 3 DEALING WITH PROBLEMS CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY:

If a circumstance arises in which a member of staff believes that a pupil is at risk of either (i) **serious physical or mental harm**, or (ii) **causing such harm to others**, they should if possible discuss the matter with the pupil and seek their permission before disclosing the information.

However, where a circumstance arises which is, in the judgement of the member of staff, **sufficiently serious to warrant the divulging of personal information, even against the pupil's wishes**, they should consider informing the pupil concerned beforehand.

There may be other **less serious circumstances** where a member of staff believes that a pupil's well-being will be enhanced by sharing confidential information with someone else. Where possible, this should be discussed with the pupil beforehand and their consent obtained.

The information passed on by a member of staff should normally be restricted to (i) those facts relevant to the **specific issue** being currently considered, and (ii) those other **people who need to know**.

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<sup>1</sup> These guidelines are not intended to circumscribe or supplant the particular boundaries of confidentiality which govern the professional relationships of those such as doctors, nurses, counsellors or priests.

## APPENDIX 4

### DESIGNATED SCHOOL GOVERNOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

The designated School Governor will be contacted by a member of staff at Charterhouse who has received a report or has evidence of child abuse involving the Headmaster. Their phone number will be made available by the Deputy Headmaster.

The designated School Governor will take particular responsibility for ensuring that the Governing Body's responsibilities concerning Child Protection – as set out in Section 5.1 above – are carried out.

September 2006  
[Revised May 2007]