

# **SHIRLEY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE**

## **Safeguarding Children Policy**

Shirley High School Performing Arts College promotes a safe learning environment where everyone feels able to enjoy and achieve and where success is recognised and rewarded.

### **Philosophy**

We believe that for everyone to benefit from the learning community that is Shirley High School it should be a place where students, staff, helpers, families and other visitors will be made welcome and comfortable and where we will treat each other with respect.

We believe that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, neglect and abuse and that their welfare is of paramount importance. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure good manners and behaviour where learning and personal development takes place in a climate of trust and confidence.

The school has a system of rewards which aims to motivate and encourage students that helps to build individual self-confidence and self-esteem where we value everyone's unique contribution to our community.

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and staff for ensuring that they are protected from harm. All staff have a duty of care to ensure that if there are any concerns relating to the welfare or safety of a child their concern is immediately relayed to the designated senior staff with responsibility for Child Protection.

### **Principles**

The school will :

Designate two senior staff, one male and one female who have responsibility for Child Protection.

Promote a positive relationship with parents/carers and involve them in the implementation of this policy but where there may be conflict between the needs of the child and those of parents/carers or professionals, the needs of the child will come first.

Provide video camera evidence of any incident, if available, recognising that CCTV cameras are not and will not be used for the monitoring of teaching and learning. They are to deter poor behaviour and for the support and protection of staff. That the decision not to have a CCTV camera installed in a classroom is at the discretion of the teacher responsible for that classroom. That where the teacher responsible for a classroom base would like the CCTV provision switched off, the camera will be disconnected.

Adopt safe recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that all staff and volunteers have been appropriately screened prior to appointment

Provide appropriate child protection training through the staff induction programme and within continuing professional development opportunities.

Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, encouraging understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds

Promote self-esteem and individual responsibility

Promote positive relationships based on mutual respect

Educate others to reduce harm and neglect, both inside and outside school and in the future

## **The Role of the school in the Safeguarding of Children**

[Safeguarding Children Policy](#)

In line with ECM and in particular 'Staying Safe' the school will:-

Create a safe environment

Educate children how to keep safe

Refer concerns

Promote the ability to bounce back from adversity

### **Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher is ultimately responsible for the well being of all students and staff but the school has designated two senior staff, Mr Foskett and Ms Francis to oversee responsibility for the safeguarding of students. In their absence any matters should be directed to the Head Teacher. Reference to these staff should be immediate. Designated staff will continue to receive appropriate training to ensure that they are able to fulfil this role. Their role includes the following responsibilities:

To provide the point of contact for staff who have concerns or information that an existing student and/or a sibling may be suffering abuse now, or has done in the past or is likely to in the future

To ensure all staff have a copy of the 'Safeguarding Children Policy' and that its procedures are adhered to.

To liaise with the Head Teacher on all matters regarding the safeguarding of children

To make any necessary referrals to external agencies e.g. social services and the police

To liaise with the LEA lead Officer for Child Protection, and the Head teacher and/or nominated governor in the event of an allegation against a member of staff .

To provide information to the nominated governor regarding the number and nature of referrals (to enable them to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the students)

To promote, monitor and record all child protection training undertaken across the school

To ensure the whole school community contributes fully to the child protection process

The appropriate Head of Year will be responsible for monitoring the students who have been identified as being at risk and completing, where appropriate, a PEP (Personal Education Plan) and liaise with Social workers where necessary.

### **Categories and indicators of Abuse**

All staff, in particular those having daily contact with students (form tutors, support assistants), have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring those concerns to the nominated members of staff. Recognised categories of abuse are:

Physical Abuse: non accidental injuries (including self abuse), bruising, wounding burns, fractures –indicators include;

- obvious signs of injury,
- injuries which are unusual or unexplained,
- injuries, which while explained are frequent.

Neglect: the chronic inattention to basic needs – indicators include;

- dirty, unkempt appearance
- developmental delay
- low self esteem
- hunger
- self abuse

Sexual abuse: the involvement of children or young people in sexual activity, this includes the abuse of a position of trust by an adult with professional responsibility to a child – indicators include:

- physical difficulties such as wetting or soiling
- extreme variations in behaviour
- sexualised language, behaviour or play
- indirect disclosure through play, drawing or written work
- self abuse

Emotional Abuse or neglect: persistent emotional ill treatment such as the extreme denial of love, affection or approval – indicators include:

- low self esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety
- attention seeking behaviours including self abuse
- emotional developmental delay

### **Action to be taken by school staff**

Abuse of a child is a crime and all staff have a duty to be vigilant to the indicators of abuse and to refer concerns to a designated member of staff for child protection. All concerns must be logged or recorded and should be referred to either of the designated senior staff, who will provide appropriate support and guidance and if necessary make a referral to social services and in certain circumstances the police.

Sometimes, however, children and young people who are suffering abuse choose a trusted adult to tell. If a child discloses abuse in school, the person hearing the disclosure must:

- listen, allowing the child to recall freely
- reassure the child that they are believed
- make notes as soon as possible recording, as accurately as possible, the words used by the child
- but be clear with the child that the information will have to be passed on and that there are people who will be able to help
- refer to either of the designated staff who will contact social services and the police if necessary.

**DO NOT ASK THE CHILD QUESTIONS OR ATTEMPT TO DISCUSS OR ADVISE THE STUDENT OR MAKE ANY JUDGEMENT ON THE VALIDITY OF THE ISSUE ; This is the role of specially trained social workers and police officers. Anyone else asking questions of the child and/or the parent/carer could be detrimental to further investigation.**

## **Record Keeping and Data Protection**

Record keeping is an important element of the school's approach to child protection and it is important that consistency is maintained by all those involved. Separate plastic folders should contain all records of concern referred about an individual student. The records are held securely in the office of the designated staff whilst students remain on the school roll, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

It should be clear that if a referral leads to subsequent investigation or proceedings, either civil or criminal, the records and notes made by staff could be used in evidence.

Where concerns arise about the safety or wellbeing of a student, or there are indications that the child may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, staff will record on paper the following details, if provided, without further questioning:

- The reason for the concern
- What was said or witnessed and details of any other persons present
- Dates and times of incidents and when the notes were made
- Date, time and outcome of any discussion with the parent or carer.
- Date, time and outcome of any discussion with the Headteacher, social services staff or other relevant professionals consulted

Notes will be passed to either of the designated persons: Ms Francis or Mr Foskett who will keep all welfare concerns and child protection records in a secure place.

These records form evidence and may be used in the child protection referral and any subsequent investigation or legal proceedings; they are exempt from the open file regulations and do not have to be made available to parents or carers requesting access to the student's file.

## **Confidentiality**

All members of the Shirley High School Community are entitled to privacy. In general confidential information about children, families or others within the school should be kept confidential and privacy respected.

Where there are concerns that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, information must be shared with the designated person in the first instance and unless to seek consent would pose further risk to the child, parents should be informed. If necessary this information will be shared with social services and the police.

Where staff or other adults in school have concerns, either due to what they have seen or heard or in relation to a direct disclosure by a child, they cannot keep that information confidential. It must be shared with the designated person in the interests of safeguarding that child.

Other staff may need to be alerted to concerns about a child or young person, possibly in order to monitor the concern or to gather further evidence prior to a referral being made, or to assist in providing appropriate support to a child or young person after a referral has been made. Information should only be shared on a strict need to know basis. Where appropriate staff reporting a concern will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

## **Allegations against staff**

Shirley High School believes that all members of the school community are entitled to receive care and protection from harm. We will not accept inappropriate behaviour towards students or staff, and will ensure that any concerns or allegations of impropriety are dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively.

Staff should not pass details of personal email addresses or web sites to any students past or present.

Where an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or other adult appears to necessitate a child protection enquiry, the head teacher will seek advice from the local authority lead officer for child protection and will agree the procedure to be followed.

Such allegations could include;

- Inappropriate or sexualised touch or language
- Physical assault such as hitting, smacking, pushing
- Ill treatment

Any staff disclosing information, regarding inappropriate behaviour by colleagues, will be listened to and supported by the leadership of the school, in line with the 'Whistle Blowing Policy'.

Parents of a child allegedly abused by a member of staff or other adult in the school will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.

Any member of the teaching staff facing investigation into an allegation of abuse will be subject to the procedures laid down by the joint Teacher Union – NEOST guidance and will be offered appropriate access to professional and personal support networks, and, will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation. Non teaching members of staff are advised to seek appropriate union support.

## **Working with outside agencies**

Shirley High School recognises the authority of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and will be proactive in working together to safeguard children. We will share through the designated persons, appropriate information with investigating teams, and contribute to child protection conferences, core groups and care plans.

Any incident requiring advice from, or referral to, Croydon Children Services and arising out of normal hours will be referred directly to the emergency/out of hours team (Tel. 020 8726 6400) or failing that directly to the police child protection team after reference to a designated person. (020 8649 1781)

## **Other policies**

We will develop and evaluate all school policies with a view to safeguarding and promoting the well being of all our students. We will take account of the principles outlined in this policy and ensure that all other policies and procedures support the protection of children from harm or neglect, in particular through:

[Safeguarding Children Policy](#)

- Anti bullying policy: to ensure physical and emotional security for all our students and staff
- Attendance policy: to ensure absence is followed up quickly and vulnerable children are supported appropriately
- Behaviour and Physical Restraint policies; to ensure that appropriate rules and boundaries are in place and to be clear about the sanctions which apply
- Cyber bullying policy; to ensure issues related to texting and imaging transmitted by computer or mobile phone
- Recruitment and selection policy: to ensure suitable staff are appointed
- Teaching and Learning policy: to assist children in understanding what is and is not acceptable behaviour towards them and staying safe
- Whistle blowing policy: ensuring that any concerns raised about staff, governors and others associated and working within the school are dealt with appropriately

### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

This policy is a dynamic document and will be updated as new legislation and guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth.

Modified and agreed by the governor responsible for 'Safeguarding Children' on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009