

Rendcomb College **Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures**

Rendcomb College fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children (child protection).

Policy

Our policy applies to all staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors and volunteers in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in line with Government guidance by using at least one NSL accredited recruiter on all interview working panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse by logging welfare concerns and referring to the Children's Helpdesk.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

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

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to:

- Ensure we have a designated person for safeguarding (child protection) who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection who has received appropriate training.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection.

- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligation on the school website.
- Notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a Child Protection Plan (previously known as being on the child protection register).
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer including supply or agency workers, contractors or governors.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. 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. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- 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.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil who has a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Procedures for Safeguarding Children

It is the College policy to comply fully with the child protection procedures established by Gloucester County Council for use in educational establishments.

The College has an important role in its frequent contact with the children. The staff get to know the children quite well: they form trusting relationships; they see changes in behaviour, and they are available for the sharing of concerns.

It is the policy of Rendcomb College to safeguard the welfare of the children by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times. If there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, this must be referred immediately to the College Child Protection Officer.

The College is not an investigation or intervention agency. At all times the child's welfare must be paramount. Swift reporting will enable the correct authorities to give advice and take appropriate action. There is an obligation for the College to act in this way.

Any information conveyed by an employee to the College Child Protection Officer must not be withheld or filtered but must be passed on immediately to the correct agency. These procedures are not negotiable; they enable the governors to fulfill their legal as well as moral responsibilities.

All allegations/suspicions are to be referred immediately and directly to the College Child Protection Officer. No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken. If the Headmaster is implicated the College Child Protection Officer will refer direct to the designated Governor, and in their absence the Chair of Governors. All allegations or suspicions are to be referred, no matter how insignificant they may seem to be, or when they occur.

Procedures at Rendcomb College

1. Any suspicion that a pupil at the college is suffering from abuse should, in the first instance be referred to the member of staff designated to deal with child abuse (appointed Child Protection Officer): Sandy Westhead; tel: 01285 832309; Melanie Bleaken; tel: 01285 832310
e-mail: westheads@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
e-mail: bleakenm@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
2. If there is any injury to the child which requires treatment, the member of staff responsible for the child should contact Sister in the Medical Centre: tel: 01285 831239; mobile: 07786 653983
3. The concern of the reporting member of staff should be accurately and legibly recorded in writing, signed and dated and given to the College Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.
4. The College Child Protection Officer will arrange to interview the child to further substantiate the concern.
5. The College Child Protection Officer will follow the guidelines given in the 'Stages of Referral for Educational Settings', as directed by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Board.

6. If there is a concern for immediate safety out of hours, then contact will be made to the 'Children and Young People's Directorate' (CYPD) on their Emergency Duty Number. If the child is felt to be in any danger, he or she should not be allowed to go home, if this is at all possible.
7. The discussion with 'Children and Young People's Directorate' should involve consideration of how, when and by whom the parents should be informed of the concern, bearing in mind on the one hand, the need to protect the child and on the other, the duty of the 'Children and Young People's Directorate' and the College to work in partnership with parents, wherever possible.

Staff guidance

To assist all staff (teaching and non-teaching) the College will provide:

- Regular INSET training (every three years)
- Documentation from the INSET training
- A green card with the following information:
 1. Stop and listen to what the child is saying
 2. Don't promise confidentiality; you cannot promise not to tell anyone
 3. Do not ask leading questions – keep them open
 4. Afterwards:
 - Write down exactly what was said, date and sign
 - a. Contact the College Child Protection Officer:
Sandy Westhead: **Tel: 01285 832309**
 5. If unable to contact Sandy in school and you feel it is urgent, then phone her at home.
 6. Do not investigate further
 7. If the child is distressed or injured contact the Medical Centre
Tel: 01285 832329 **mobile: 07786 653983**

Links

Staff should be aware of the following documents which are linked with the Child Protection Policy

- A Comprehensive Code of Safe Practice (*revised & issued by DRD*)
- Physical Restraint Policy (*revised & issued by DHM*)

