



Watford Grammar School for Girls

Safeguarding Policy

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1. Introduction

Safeguarding is ‘everyone’s responsibility’. This policy sets out Watford Girls responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 to ensure children, young people and adults at risk are kept safe from harm.

1.1. Terminology:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to:

- **protecting children from maltreatment**
- **preventing impairment of children’s health or development**
- **ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care**

The aim of **safeguarding** is to enable children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

1.2. What’s the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?

Safeguarding is an ‘umbrella’ term that incorporates child protection. **Child Protection** is the process and activities undertaken to fulfil statutory obligations to protect specific children who have been identified as suffering, or at risk of significant harm. All agencies and individuals should proactively **safeguard and promote** the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

This policy is available on the school website and is included in the staff handbook.

2. Principles and Aims

Our Principles:

- The welfare of children, and their wishes and feelings are afforded consideration when developing and carry out school activities
- All children will have equal rights to support and protection irrespective of their race, age, ability, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation and culture
- All staff and volunteers have a professional role to identify and respond to the needs of children and report any concerns immediately

We aim:

- To provide all staff (employed, contracted and visiting) with the necessary information / training to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children
- To provide parents carers and children with information about the schools arrangements to keep children safe.
- To ensure safe and consistent best practice across the school
- To demonstrate the school’s commitment with regard to safeguarding children

3. Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for Managing Allegations of Abuse Against People Who Work With Children or Those Who Are in A Position of Trust, Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Interagency Procedures Manual http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_manage_alleg.html
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, independent schools, academies and free schools, DfE (February 2015) www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Act 2002 Section 175 – requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Section 157 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 - require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for Safer Working Practice, Safer Recruitment Consortium (September 2015)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners, DfE (March 2015)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (2016) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Offences Act, HM Government (2003)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' Standards 2012, DfE (2011) These standards set the minimum requirements for teachers' practice and conduct. Teachers, including Headteachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, DfE (March 2015) Non statutory advice which helps everyone who works with children to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action A copy of this can be found in RMStaff /Pastoral/Medical all staff/Safeguarding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, DfE (2015)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 26, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) EU Regulation from 25th May 2018. Legislation which will determine how people's personal data is processed and kept safe, and the legal rights individuals have in relation to their own data

3.1. Relevant Associated Policies/Procedures

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, this policy should also be read in conjunction with other associated policies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Complaints procedure
- Data Protection
- Emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures
- E Safety
- Health and Safety
- Medicines and medical policy, including first aid
- Safer Recruitment
- SEND
- Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct
- Whistle-blowing

4. Safeguarding Themes

4.1. Anti-Bullying

Watford Girls recognises the right of our children and young people to develop with confidence in an environment that is safe and free from the emotional and physical distress that can be seen as a result of bullying. It is the responsibility of Watford Girls to ensure that procedures are in place that will monitor and address anti-bullying issues. There is a more detailed Anti-Bullying Policy available on the school website and a hard copy is available from staff resources.

4.2. Anti-Radicalisation and Extremism

The school works to provide an environment promoting tolerance and respect for others' views and beliefs and the values of democracy. The Prevent duty is implemented and staff are aware of the threats and risks linked to radicalisation. Behaviour or language suggesting extremism is challenged and addressed. Any concerns will be referred through the appropriate channels in accordance with the Child Protection policy.

4.3. Attendance

In accordance with the School's Attendance Policy, absences are rigorously pursued and recorded. The school, in partnership with the appropriate agencies, takes action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We implement the statutory requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children missing education (CME) and off-rolling and understand how important this practice is in safeguarding children and young people. For further details please refer to the Attendance Policy.

4.4. Child Protection

There is a detailed Child Protection Policy operating within the school. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. It is the Governing Body's duty to ensure the policy is reviewed annually and any deficiencies within the policy addressed immediately.

All Child Protection concerns will be managed in accordance with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures. A copy of these procedures can be found at www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk. Children's Services telephone number **0300 1234043 (including out of hours)**

4.5. Child Sexual Exploitation

Senior management and governors in the school are committed to dealing with the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation, and will co-operate fully with outside agencies including the police, health and social care to enable potential situations of Child Sexual Exploitation to be identified rapidly and a swift response follows, in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, and clearly defined interventions can be put in place without delay. Interventions will include a robust multi-agency approach, based on an infrastructure of support around the young person and family. Support will be offered to the young person's peer group and their families, where appropriate.

The lead governor for CSE will be : _____

The lead CSE teacher will be: **Jo Shrimpton** the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The school, together with Hertfordshire safeguarding children board (HSCB) is working to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and help prevent it happening to young people in Hertfordshire. Concerns will be reported to: Children's Services (including out of hours) on 0300 123 4043 Herts Constabulary non-emergency [Tel:101](tel:101)

4.5.1. CSE Procedures

Procedures for what to do is a young person is identified as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation are found in Appendix 1.

If there is a fear a child is in immediate danger, call 999

4.6. Complaints

The school has a Complaints Policy available to parents, pupils and staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found on the school website.

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff.

4.7. Confidentiality

All staff will understand that safeguarding issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved, but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Safeguarding information will be stored and handled in line with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. The DSP will normally obtain consent from the child/parent to share sensitive information with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so (e.g. to help to protect a child), the DSP may share information without consent and will record the reason for this. Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the GDPR, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. The School will retain this information on the pupil file and transfer to the next school/archive the information in line with The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 and The Information and Records Management Society. The school will only share information about children with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil. Please see Hertfordshire's Pupil Safeguarding Records Guidance at http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/policy/local.shtml#pupilsafe for further information.

4.8. Curriculum

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through PACE and Forum lessons and through all aspects of school life.

The school is committed to ensuring that children are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All children know that we have senior members of staff with responsibility for child protection and they are made aware of whom these persons are. We

inform children of whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm.

Subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education discuss relevant safeguarding issues with the children. Please see the ESafety section of this policy for further details on this topic.

4.9. Female Genital Mutilation

If any persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work, in the course of their work in school, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out this will be reported to the police.

4.10. Forced Marriage

The school will ensure that teaching staff and key support staff are aware of how to act if they are concerned that a girl maybe forced into a marriage, with whilst in the country or while abroad. Appendix 2 outlines the action to be taken by staff.

4.11. Health and Safety

We have a Health & Safety Policy which demonstrates the consideration we give to minimising any risk to the children when on the school premises and when undertaking activities out of school under the supervision of our staff. At all times there has to be appropriate staffing levels and when off-site, appropriate and agreed pupil / adult ratios are maintained. The lead adult always assesses visits/trips as to the level of risk and all trips are finally authorised by the Headmistress.

Our school has lone working risk assessments in place and procedures for staff where there is a security risk due to the need to work alone; staff at high risk will receive appropriate training.

A copy of the Health and Safety Policy is available on the school website.

4.12. Inclusion and Diversity

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

Our school ethos promotes and accepts the differences between all children and adults. In practice this is about ensuring inclusion of individuals and treating them fairly and equally, no matter the diversity of their race, gender, age, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Promoting equality and diversity in education is essential for both teachers and children. The aim is to create a classroom environment where all children can thrive together and understand that individual characteristics make people unique and not 'different' in a negative way.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016), to ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will also give special consideration to additionally vulnerable groups (as outlined in our Child Protection Policy), for example children with disabilities or special educational needs. Special consideration is also given in the provision of safeguarding information and resources in accessible formats for children and adults with communication needs.

4.13. Online Safety

We have an Esafety policy which can be found on the school website.

Our policy includes how we teach children to stay safe when using the internet in and out of school- including the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying. Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

The School will ensure that appropriate filtering methods are in place to ensure that children are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material.

4.13.1. Digital images

The use of digital images in schools is a complex area. The school has a clear and sufficiently detailed policy which covers the taking and use of digital images and video of children and takes steps to ensure that it is understood and enforced.

Staff and children sign ICT Acceptable Use Agreements. For staff this includes a section on the use of digital images and clarification about the position regarding the use of personal mobile phones/cameras for taking pictures. Where volunteers are supporting school staff, they should abide by the same rules as school staff as far as is reasonable.

4.14. Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for the children at our school. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour and actions of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children. The Child Protection Policy Page 14 sets out the procedures. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-agency Procedures and Part 4 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (2016) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Hertfordshire LADO Service can be contacted on **0300 123 4043**.

4.15. Partnership with Other Services

Our school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies that are partners of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. There is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to ensure the safeguarding of all children.

4.16. Partnership with Parents

Watford Girls is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm and have their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. Watford Girls will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with *Jo Shrimpton* (lead DSP) *Clover Hibbert*, *Chris Bevan* (Deputy DSPs).

4.17. Safer Recruitment and Selection

Our recruitment process selects, screens, trains and supervises staff and volunteers so that the appointment of unsuitable people can be deterred and rejected from working with children. A copy of the School's Recruitment Policy is available on the school website.

The School has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or HR.

Our school also adhere to the guidance issued by The Department for Education in 2015 regarding persons who are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006.

4.18. Safer Working Practice

All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The Teachers' Standards (DfE,2011) are augmented by standards of personal and professional conduct e.g. ethics and behaviour, in and out of school. Teachers are expected to 'uphold public trust in the profession by showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others, not undermining fundamental British values and ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability'.

All staff will be provided with a copy of our school's code of conduct/staff behaviour policy/handbook at induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

The link below will direct you to the current government guidance on safer working practice which we share with staff: <http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices-2015-final.pdf>

4.18.1. Abuse of Position Of Trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over intentionally to behave in certain sexual ways in relation to a child aged under 18, where the adult is in a position of trust in respect of the child, even if the behavior is consensual.

4.19. Site Security

The security measures put into place at Watford Girls have taken into account the need to balance the need to remain a welcoming environment whilst ensuring the safety of all our children and staff. A security risk assessment will be completed and reviewed annually (or earlier if deemed necessary).

4.19.1. Access to buildings

The school will take all reasonable efforts to control access to the buildings and grounds of the school to prevent unauthorised access to children and ensure the personal safety of staff. The access control procedures for the buildings are: Pin code access to all external doors.

4.19.2. Visitors, contractors and maintenance personnel

The control of visitors, contractors and maintenance personnel is a fundamental part of our site security policy for the safeguarding of both people and property.

Where the Governing Body transfers control or otherwise allows the use of school premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of school hours, we will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to co-ordinate with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office Inventory system and to display a visitors badge whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

4.20. Whistle blowing

All staff and volunteers are made to feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place to be raised with the school's senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer/through the whistleblowing procedure or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- Children's Services 0300 123 4043
- NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix 1: What To Do If A Young Person Is Identified As At-Risk Of Child Sexual Exploitation

- Complete the online assessment which is referred to in the section above.
- Contact the MASH.
- If a young person discloses and there is evidence to suggest that a crime has been or may have been committed against them, contact the police and report the crime noting the incident number for future reference.
- Send in a referral to social care following the procedures in the Thresholds and Pathways document. Attach the completed CSE Toolkit as supporting evidence to the referral form itself and submit them electronically.

Upon a concern about CSE being raised in relation to a child or young person by a staff member in school or a member of the public, DSLs will need to complete the following actions as soon as possible and within 2 hours :

- speak with the child/young person if appropriate
- complete the online CSE assessment
- contact the MASH and, if needed, Herts police
- submit a referral into social care with the completed toolkit

If a child or young person goes missing at any point during this process, the MASH and the Police must be contacted immediately:

- In an emergency call 999
- Children's Services (including out of hours) on 0300 123 4043
- Herts Constabulary non-emergency [Tel:101](tel:101)

Appendix 2: Steps to take in the Event of a disclosure of Forced Marriage

Guidance is taken from the Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage documents which is in the Safeguarding Folder on the Staff Area.

TO BE TAKEN IN ALL CASES

Cases of forced marriage can involve complex and sensitive issues that should be handled by a child protection or adult protection specialist with expertise in forced marriage. The statutory guidance on forced marriage states that all organisations should have “a lead person with overall responsibility for safeguarding children, protecting vulnerable adults or victims of domestic abuse – the same person should lead on forced marriage”. Although front line staff should contact this specialist as soon as possible, there may be occasions when they will need to gather some information from the person to establish the facts and assist the referral.

4.1 FIRST STEPS IN ALL CASES

- See them immediately in a secure and private place where the conversation cannot be overheard
- See them on their own – even if they attend with others
- Explain all the options to them (section 3.5.)
- Recognise and respect their wishes
- Perform a risk assessment
- Contact, as soon as possible, a trained specialist who has responsibility for forced marriage
- If the young person is under 18 years of age, refer them to the Designated Safeguarding Person and activate local safeguarding procedures
- Reassure them about confidentiality i.e. practitioners will not inform their family
- Establish a way of contacting them discreetly in the future (section 3.6)
- Obtain full details to pass on to the trained specialist
- Consider the need for immediate protection and placement away from the family.

DO NOT:

- Send them away
- Approach members of their family or the community unless they expressly ask you to do so
- Share information with anyone without their express consent (section 3.3 & 3.7)
- Breach confidentiality (except as set out in section 3.7)
- Attempt to be a mediator (section 3.10).

4.2 ADDITIONAL STEPS

- Give them, where possible, the choice of the ethnicity and gender of the specialist who deals with their case
- Inform them of their right to seek legal advice and representation
- If necessary, record any injuries and arrange a medical examination (section 3.8)
- Give them personal safety advice (section 3.11)
- Develop a safety plan in case they are seen i.e. prepare another reason why you are meeting
- Establish if there is a family history of forced marriage, e.g. siblings forced to marry. Other indicators may include domestic violence, self-harm, family disputes, unreasonable restrictions (e.g. withdrawal from education or “house arrest”) or missing persons within the family
- Advise them not to travel overseas. Discuss the difficulties they may face (section 2.10)

- Identify any potential criminal offences and refer to the police if appropriate
- Give them advice on what service or support they should expect and from whom
- Ensure that they have the contact details for the trained specialist
- Maintain a full record of the decisions made and the reason for those decisions
- Information from case files and database files should be kept strictly confidential and preferably be restricted to named members of staff only
- Refer them, with their consent, to appropriate local and national support groups, counselling services and women's groups that have a history of working with survivors of domestic abuse and forced marriage (page 100).

Remember: When referring a case of forced marriage to other organisations, ensure they are capable of handling the case appropriately. If in doubt, approach established women's groups who have a history of working with survivors of domestic abuse and forced marriage and ask these groups to refer the person to reputable agencies.

Circumstances may be more complex if the person is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Refer to appropriate support groups (page 100). British Embassies and High Commissions can only help British nationals or, in certain circumstances EU or Commonwealth nationals. This means that if a non-British national leaves the UK to be forced into marriage overseas, the British Embassy or High Commission will not be able to assist them.

If in doubt, ask the Forced Marriage Unit for advice.