

**RIVERSIDE SCHOOL**

**SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

***This policy was approved at a meeting of the Governing Board on:  
14 February, 2019***

(Policy to be reviewed annually).

Next review date – Board meeting No 4, 2020

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## **SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Staff and governors recognise that Riverside School has a statutory responsibility to provide a caring, safe, healthy and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical, moral and emotional development of each individual student and proactively protects them from harm.

There is evidence that the incidence of abuse amongst students with learning disabilities can be up to four times more prevalent than amongst the general student population. Because of the inability of many of our students to alert others to their problems, they are dependent upon those working with them being able to recognise and interpret danger signals. This demands high levels of vigilance and sensitivity on the part of school staff.

Consequently general safeguarding and specific child protection awareness and procedures form an important part of every adult's induction into the school, and regular refresher training is carried out with all staff ensuring that there is a culture of vigilance across the school, and that actions taken are always correct and timely.

This policy is informed by and linked to: *The Haringey Area Child Protection Committee Model Child Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*, (August, 2017).

Other publications which have informed the policy are listed below. (*All are readily available for reference and scrutiny in school in the 'Child Protection' section of the 'Policies and Procedures' folders*):

- *DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'*, (September, 2018)
- *HM Govt 'Working together to Safeguard children'* (July, 2018)
- *Ofsted 'Safeguarding children and young people and young vulnerable adults policy'* (February, 2015)
- *DfE 'Safeguarding Disabled Children – Practice Guidance'*, (July, 2009)
- *UK Council for Child Internet Safety 'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people'*, (2016)
- *DfE 'Child sexual exploitation'* (February, 2017)
- *The 'London Safeguarding Children Board – London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance' – 5th Edition*, (28 September, 2018)

*Hard copies of the London Procedures are kept in Leadership Team office* When necessary the school procedures are followed by staff under the guidance of one of the school's four trained and accredited Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), in order to effectively safeguard the health and welfare of students in the school, (currently this is the headteacher, deputy headteacher and after-school and holiday clubs coordinator).

The DSLs will, as necessary, take advice from Children and Young People's Service child protection advisers in order to agree the best way forward.

All adults in the school have a duty of care to raise any queries or concerns they may have regarding any possible risk to a student's safety or well-being in or outside school. When there is a need to share a concern with social services, the social services team involved will then decide on any action to be taken.

We will always seek to work in partnership with parents, and try to ensure that they are fully informed of, and participate in, any action concerning their child. However, the welfare of the student will always be the paramount consideration in all cases.

## **POLICY AIMS**

*The aims of this policy are:*

- To support every student's holistic development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To develop the school's 'Student Voice' culture in order to equip students with mechanisms to express any concerns they may have regarding their well-being or safety.
- To raise the awareness of all adults associated with the school of the need to safeguard our students, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting any concerns they may have regarding the safety of a student, be they as a result of any suspicion of the following signs of abuse; neglect, physical, emotional or sexual, and no matter how apparently minor.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all staff and other adults associated with the school, in order to maintain an effective safeguarding culture.
- To ensure effective school strategies and procedures are in place to monitor any students already known to be at risk of harm.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships and communication systems with other agencies involved in safeguarding of students, in particular the relevant Social Services departments, the Police and the Educational Welfare Service.
- To ensure that all adults associated with our school who have supervised and unsupervised access to students have been checked as to their suitability according to statutory requirements
- To ensure that there is regular monitoring and evaluation of all the school's safeguarding and child protection processes and procedures in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

We will ensure that:

- There are four fully-trained Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) at the school who undertake regular training and are known to all.
- There is a Designated Children in Care (CiC) Lead at the school.
- There is a fully-trained identified governor of the school with responsibility for safeguarding, child protection and CiC students.
- All adults associated with the school develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of possible abuse.
- All adults associated with the school know how to respond to any student who discloses information indicating a possible safeguarding concern, and know how to report it.

All parents are made aware of the responsibilities of school staff and other adults associated with the school (as outlined in the Aims listed above) with regard to the school's safeguarding procedures.

- All staff receive child protection and safeguarding training from the headteacher at the start of each school year: training includes reading the first chapter of the most recent version of the *DfE* 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance. and familiarisation with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Any members of staff who join the school after the headteacher's annual training receive an identical training package as part of their induction into the school.
- All of the school's child protection/safeguarding procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.
- We have at least two emergency contacts, in addition to the parent(s)' details, for every student in the school.
- There is an agreed procedure within the school which is followed by all members of the school community in cases where there is any suspicion of actual or potential risk of harm to a student. (See *Reporting Safeguarding or Child Protection Concerns* below).

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RIVERSIDE SCHOOL  
REPORTING SAFEGUARDING OR CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

If you see or hear anything that gives you cause for concern from a safeguarding/child protection perspective from or about a student in the school, (including unexplained marks/comments/behaviour out of the ordinary etc.) you are required to report it.

- **Alert one of the school's DSLs** (Designated Safeguarding Leads) **on the same day, as early in the day as possible** - within the hour preferably - Take your written notes, timed/dated and with your signature.
- **Listen to/communicate with the student** (if they are verbal and if you are being addressed directly). Be supportive. Don't ask leading questions, but do establish sufficient information to make your notes meaningful and useful. (*It is irrelevant whether you believe a colleague may have reported a similar concern. Write what you know or have heard*).
- **If the student is non-verbal but can use Makaton**, still take your notes to a DSL, but ensure that **David Wilson** (Team 2 Leader) is also contacted since he is trained in using Makaton to interview students on safeguarding matters.
- **If your source is another adult or student**, take notes of what you've heard.
- Report to **Martin Doyle, headteacher, Kelly Whiting, deputy headteacher, Despina Moutafis, Main School teacher** or **Joanne Ferry, Team Spirit Coordinator**, who are Riverside's 2018/19 DSLs. They have been trained and are qualified to undertake this role. They will take full responsibility for the case and refer on to all relevant agencies as may be required.
- **Discuss your concerns with the DSL** – take a completed school Incident/Disclosure form with you if these are the first concerns you have had about the student. Should you be reporting concerns about a student for whom you've previously completed an Incident/Disclosure form, subsequent reports can be in note form.
- **If the event of neither DSL being available** take the completed form or notes to any other 2018/19 LT/SMT teacher, (**Nigel Cushion, Marc Kirby, David Wilson, Maggie Jozefowicz, Oona Bradley or Ben Annett**, or to the school nurse, (**Dan Elliott-Labaleta**). They will take delegated responsibility for the concern and decide on next steps, with or without discussion with the DSLs.
- **In some cases, the DSL may ask you to seek evidence of a reasonable explanation**. This may involve a phone call home or other instructed action.
- **Ask your DSL (the next day or later), whether your concern has been referred on to statutory agencies**. Your DSL will be able to tell you this, but may not be able to comment further at this or any other stage.
- **Do continue to seek advice from your DSL** if any aspect of the procedures are unclear in any particular case you're involved in, (or generally).

- **DON'T...do anything else**, *(unless instructed to by your DSL).*
- **DON'T...enter into further discussion with the student**, *(unless instructed to).*
- **DON'T...discuss any aspect of the case with anyone at all, inside or outside the school.** Maintain strict confidentiality in and out of school for the sake of all concerned in the case.

## **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS (DSLs)**

The school's DSLs are responsible for:

- Adhering to the LA, LSCB, Pan-London, DfE and internal school procedures with regard to referring a student to the appropriate agencies should any concerns be raised to him/her regarding any possible abuse of a student, or other actual or potential threat to their safety.
- Keeping written records of concerns raised about any student regardless of whether the concern leads to further actions or referrals.
- Ensuring that all student safeguarding records are kept confidentially, securely and separately from other student records.
- Ensuring that the school is represented by a suitable school professional at all case conferences, core group and TAC, (Team Around the Child) meetings involving Riverside students.
- Ensuring that any student currently subject to a Social Services Protection Plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services. *(Other cases of student absence are dealt with by class teachers who can refer any causes for concern to the senior teacher responsible for attendance. The senior teacher has close links with the Educational Welfare Service, and can make referrals to the service as required).*
- Ensuring that their own accredited refresher training in safeguarding and child protection is carried out at least every two years.
- Organising and leading on an annual September training session for all staff in safeguarding and child protection, ensuring that any staff absent on the day receive separate training and keeping records of the training for both groups.
- Ensuring that the individual induction procedures and processes for all staff new to the school include thorough guidance on the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, including reading statutory documentation, and that the induction meeting is signed off by inductor and inductee alike

## **STUDENT WELLBEING MAG (MULTI-AGENCY GROUP) MEETINGS**

- On entry to the school, as part of the admissions pack, all parents sign permission for their child to be, in principle, discussed at the school's fortnightly Multi-Agency Group meetings, at which any student with current safeguarding concerns are discussed; from a medical, emotional, behavioural or child protection point of view (*further details below*).
- All new students are allocated an individual Wellbeing folder which contains any MAG notes, accident and incident reports, DCT, (Disabled Children's Team) and CAMHS-LD reports etc. This folder follows the student through their school life. (Folders remain empty or added to occasionally or regularly according to need).
- The Student Wellbeing list records whether the student is or ever has been Subject to a Plan, their CiC status, if applicable, and details of allocated social workers. Also the student's Health Folder status, (Red, Blue or Yellow).
- Every alternate Wednesday throughout the year, a Student Wellbeing MAG meeting is held at the school, chaired by the headteacher.
- MAG meetings are attended by a range of other professionals, which may include deputy head, the DCT link manager, the Riverside Therapies Lead Practitioner, School Nurse, Child and Adolescent Mental Health – Learning Difficulties, (CAMHS-LD), psychiatrist/ psychologist, link Educational Psychologist, (EP), and Physio/Manual Handling assistant.
- The format of the meetings is based on the 'Signs of Safety' model. The MAG looks at three areas when thinking about students:
  - *What are we worried about?*
  - *What's working well?*
  - *What needs to happen next?*
- At the close of discussion, a safety score is given to the student. As the situation improves for students over time, they can proceed to a score of 10 in which case they are taken off the MAG list. (For some students it would not be safe to take them off the list due to the nature of their medical needs – these students need high levels of vigilance at all times). Updated notes from each meeting form each individual student's chronology which is kept on a secure database. .
- Riverside's DSLs will give guidance as to how far a 'need-to-know' circle extends.
- Where high levels of concern have been raised during a school year regarding an individual student, classteachers and team leaders will discuss the case at the start of the school year and then confirm with a DSL what, if any, information should be passed to the student's new class team.

## **GOVERNORS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To comply with their duties under legislation relating to the management of safeguarding in the school

**(Governance Handbook, DfE, April, 2017)**

- To ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the school are effectively managed

**(Keeping children safe in education, September, 2018)**

A nominated governor undertakes training and takes responsibility for monitoring the school's safeguarding policies, protocols and practice, and interviews the headteacher annually to scrutinise data and produce a report to the governing board.

The headteacher provides a safeguarding report to the governing board annually to provide evidence of DSL and staff/adult safeguarding training, safer recruitment training, Team-Teach training and child protection data over a four-year cycle.

## **REDUCING RISKS OF HARM**

We are fully mindful of the fact that the school can play a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. The school community therefore:

- Maintains an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensures that all students know that there is an adult in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Includes in the PSHEE and SRE curriculum teaching and learning elements to equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

## **BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION**

The school is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all students. We do not allow bullying in any form. (See [Behaviour Management Policy on school website](#)). Bullying can be against individual students or groups of students and can be simply personal and/or arising from discriminatory attitudes against students from minority groups.

Staff are required to be very vigilant and any form of discriminatory bullying is taken very seriously, challenged and dealt with, be it racist, sexist, homophobic, religious, cultural or any other type of persecutory behaviour against minority-group students. (See Accessibility & Equalities Plans on school website).

Students are encouraged and supported in telling/reporting to an adult any bullying they may experience or of which they may be aware. (See Anti-Bullying Policy on school website).

Awareness of this area of the school's work is promoted through assemblies, reading stories, role-play, class meetings, the school council and visiting theatre projects. A 'Worry Box' is available in the Village area of the school for students to inform the headteacher of any concerns they may have.

Staff understand that for an adult to condone bullying has serious implications in terms of safeguarding students, and any such behaviour would lead to disciplinary action being taken against the adult concerned.

## **PREVENTING RADICALISATION**

The school works in partnership with the LA and wider school community to ensure students and families are safeguarded from radicalisation and extremism. In line with the 'Prevent Duty' the school ensures that all staff/adults in the school and governors are trained, informed, recognise vulnerability and mitigate the risks.

Key initiatives to mitigate identified risks and ensure the curriculum embeds British Values and the teaching of tolerance and respect for all faiths within a multi-cultural society are laid out in the School Improvement Plan.

Safeguarding assemblies are held at the start of each term which include Prevent elements presented in differentiated ways according to students' widely varying levels of understanding.

The school's e-Safety Policy references how staff are vigilant in monitoring any causes for concern, whether at school or at home, in terms of the possibility of students accessing and/or being influenced by radicalisation materials on the internet.

A statement regarding the school's commitment to the Prevent Agenda is on our website. The school's other various statements of values respect student and staff diversity; encourage freedom and openness and promote student voice.

## **ILLEGAL PRACTICES ARISING FROM COMMUNITY BELIEFS**

Some members of some communities hold beliefs that may be condoned within particular cultures but which are against the law in the UK. Riverside cannot condone any practices that are illegal or harmful to our students, and any instances known to staff in the following categories should be reported to the school's DSLs:

### Under-age marriages

In England, a young person cannot legally marry or have a sexual relationship until they are 16 years old or more.

### Forced marriages

A 'forced marriage', as distinct from a consensual 'arranged marriage', is a marriage conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds.

The Government's definition of a Forced Marriage is; 'A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights'.

The staff in our school, through induction and whole school training, are aware of the importance and impact on a child/student who is or whose family is involved in such situations.

### 'Honour-based' violence

This is a term that embraces a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women) including assault, imprisonment and even murder where the person is being punished by their family and their community – children and young people are being punished for supposedly undermining what the family or community believe to be correct behaviour.

All cases of disclosures or concerns relating to forced marriage/honour based violence will be reported directly to the DSL and the Police where it is deemed necessary. Information and advice will be sought from single point of access and referrals made to early help or social care where appropriate

### Female genital mutilation

This is against the law yet we know that for some in our communities FGM (previously described as female circumcision), it is considered a religious act and a cultural requirement. It is also illegal for someone to arrange for a girl to go abroad with the intention of having FGM/circumcision forced upon her.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced a new duty on teachers, social workers and healthcare professionals to report to the police known cases of FGM involving victims aged under 18. This duty came into force on 31 October 2015. This includes qualified teachers or persons who are employed or engaged to carry out teaching work in schools and other institutions. Staff who have any suspicion that FGM may be planning to be carried out on a girl are also required to report this.

### Ritualistic abuse

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be condoned is the use of any physical violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is physical abuse and people can be prosecuted even if it was their intention to help the child.

## **PEER ON PEER ABUSE**

Staff recognise that students are capable of abusing their peers. Allegations may be made against students by other students, or by staff in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. (see also Bullying and Discrimination above)

Whilst it is important to note that that it is statistically more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, this may not always apply to special schools, except in so far as girls will be in a significant minority.

Examples of peer to peer abuse could include:

1. Physical Abuse
  - spontaneous violence - hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling etc
  - pre-planned violence
  - forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
  - threats and intimidation
2. Emotional Abuse
  - teasing, often justified as 'banter' or 'just having a laugh'
  - blackmail or extortion
  - getting a student to steal for a peer
  - forced initiations and rituals
3. Sexual Abuse
  - indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
  - sexual harassment
  - forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting \*

*\* Although the capacity to 'sext' only applies to a minority of Riverside's students, nevertheless the school acknowledges the risk for this minority, and has a procedure in place to manage any incidents of student-produced sexual imagery i.e. any and all such incidents are reported to one of the school's DSLs as soon as possible.*

*The DSL would hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. Following this, the DSL would decide whether to interview the student or students involved, depending upon the circumstances and seriousness of the concerns.*

*If necessary the DSL will refer to the UK Council for Child Internet Safety 'Sexting in schools and colleges' (2016) guidance and/or seek advice from the local MASH team. or a Disabled Children's Team Manager, depending on the s t u d e n t ' s threshold.*

*In such incidences the DSL would also meet with all higher-functioning students to remind them of the risks as taught through the school's social media strategies. Parents would be informed at an early stage and involved in the process, unless, as with any safeguarding concern, the DSL has reason to believe that involving a parent could put a student at risk of harm.*

#### 4. Sexual Exploitation

- Encouraging others to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour, (for example - having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children, staying out overnight)
- encouraging other children to attend inappropriate gatherings
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts
- photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

#### Gangs

In areas where gangs are prevalent, older students may attempt to recruit younger students. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under threat of violence.

When an allegation is made by a student or staff member against another student, in relation to any of the above areas of abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) would always be informed. The DSL would contact the LA CYPS and/or the local MASH team to discuss the case since it is possible that social services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around the student concerned. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral or other actions as appropriate.

In situations where the school considers that there is a safeguarding risk is, a risk assessment would be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan. The plan would be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

#### **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION: COUNTY LINES**

Whilst all and any concerns about a student who may be at risk of criminal exploitation, (such as being forced to steal for a peer or an adult) would always be reported and addressed through the established procedures, 'county lines' is a relatively new phenomenon which schools have to be aware of. (In Riverside's case, again, this risk only applies to a small minority of higher-functioning students, but their vulnerability puts them in a high-risk group).

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and VCS (voluntary and community sector) organisations.

The government describes county lines as ‘a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities’.

School staff are trained to look for warning signs (eg persistently going missing from school or home and/or being found out-of-area; unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones; excessive receipt of texts/phone calls and/or having multiple handsets etc).

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

*‘Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology’. HM Govt ‘Working together to Safeguard children’ July 2018):*

Through the school’s various teaching and learning strategies regarding students’ safety, (and in particular those outlined in the E-Safety Policy on school website, and through staff vigilance, the school and its wider community works hard to ensure that students are free from CSE. However, in cases where there is any suspicion of CSE within the school population, this would be reported immediately to one of the school’s DSLs for action in the normal way.

## **YOUNG CARERS**

*‘A Young Carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person of any age who may be physically or mentally ill, frail, elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances’ (Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014).*

*‘A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care become excessive or inappropriate for that child risking impact on his or her emotional or physical wellbeing or educational achievement and life chances’ (ADSS/ADCS MOU 2009).*

- Young carers are one and half times more likely to have a special educational need or a long-standing illness or disability.
- One in 12 young carers is caring for more than 15 hours per week.

- Around 1 in 20 miss school because of their caring responsibilities.
- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level - the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers.
- Young carers are more than one-and-a-half times as likely to be from BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic communities, and are twice as likely to not speak English as their first language.
- Young carers are more likely than the national average to be 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19.

Despite improved awareness of the needs of young carers, there is no strong evidence that young carers are any more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies.

At Riverside at least one of the DSLs will have had training in safeguarding any Young Carers in the school, and staff can report any concerns about a student who may have a caring role at home. The DSL has had training in how to complete both the MACA-YC18/PANOC-YC20 information-gathering questionnaires ('The caring jobs I do' and 'How caring affects me') and how to refer to:

The ***Family Action Haringey Young Carers' Service/Lead Practitioner*** or

The ***More than Mentors/Young Carers Programme*** at Bruce Grove.

## **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: '*...any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality*'.

Where there is domestic abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the abuse continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.

Whilst it is known that in cases of domestic abuse, mothers often make strenuous efforts to protect children, research also tells us that the pervasive nature of the abuse means that children are often very aware of - and at times directly involved in - the abuse. (*It is accepted that, rarely, the gender roles are reversed with the mother being the perpetrator and the father being the victim, but the same principles apply*).

Domestic abuse does not always stop after separation; many children continue to be affected even if they no longer live with the perpetrator. Some children's lives are characterised by moving house several times in order to flee from the perpetrator. These repeated upheavals can cause disruptions to their education, as well as a loss of friends, family members and belonging

Domestic abuse often undermines the relationship between mother and child. It can be seen, therefore, as an attack on the mother-child relationship. Mothers describe exhaustion as a result of anxiety and violent attacks, and parenting strategies that are orientated around minimising the severity of domestic abuse, rather than what they think is good or important for their children.

Domestic abuse not only undermines the respect that mothers experiencing domestic abuse have for themselves but can also undermine the authority which they need to parent confidently.

### **Areas of concern:**

#### **Effects of physical abuse**

Children who have experienced domestic violence may exhibit physical symptoms that are associated with trauma and stress. For instance, they may develop eczema, experience bed-wetting, have nightmares, or suffer from sleep disturbances. Some children sustain physical injuries which can result from direct assaults made by the perpetrator. Children may also sustain injuries as a result of intervening to protect their mother or siblings during attacks.

#### **Social and emotional effects of abuse**

Research reports that children who have experienced domestic abuse can have intense feelings of fear and anxiety. Many children feel guilty and responsible for the abuse.. They may feel responsible for protecting their siblings, their mother and pets. Children who have experienced domestic abuse also describe feelings of extreme sadness and experience low self-esteem and depression. They might find it difficult to attend and concentrate at school. Some children become socially isolated and as a result find it difficult to make and keep friends.

#### **Behavioural indicators**

Given the physical, social and emotional effects of domestic abuse, it is not surprising that children who experience domestic abuse are more likely to have behavioural and developmental problems. Some children may experience 'externalising' problems eg they may become aggressive or 'act out'. Other children may experience 'internalising' problems, eg they may become introverted or withdrawn.

The 'cycle of violence' is often mentioned when considering the behavioural impact of domestic violence on children. There is, however, no conclusive evidence to support the theory that children who have witnessed domestic abuse will grow up to be perpetrators of - or victims of - domestic abuse in later life. Research shows that the majority of men who perpetrate domestic abuse grew up in a non-abusive environment. Many children exposed to domestic violence realise that it is wrong, and actively reject violence of all kinds.

#### **Effects on children of substance-misusing parents**

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

*Risks to children's safety can include:*

- use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children.
- children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers.
- the effects of alcohol leading to inappropriate displays of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour.
- chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance.
- disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency.
- unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment.
- drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child.

The school's DSLs will take appropriate action to ensure all students are kept safe from any of the listed or any other forms of domestic abuse, and will seek advice from the child protection advisers and agencies concerned.

## **SUPPORTING STUDENTS**

The school will ensure that any adult involved with a student who has been abused or who has witnessed violence understands that such students may experience great difficulty with developing and maintaining a sense of self-worth.

Adults concerned need to be mindful of the fact that students in these circumstances may also feel helpless and humiliated and feel self-blame. It is also important that any adult involved in such cases understands that research shows that the behaviour of a student in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal, to aggressive or withdrawn.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of many of our students who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. We will support all our students by:

- Encouraging high self-esteem and self-assertiveness.
- Challenging any aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of students.
- Notifying social services as soon as there is a significant concern, according to procedures outlined above.

- Ensuring continuing support to every student about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school, by ensuring that all appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the student's new placement. In Riverside's case this is primarily - but not only - through the year 11 transition route to the Haringey 6<sup>th</sup> Form College – the headteacher meets with the Head of the Entry Level & Foundation Department in late July annually to run through each transferring student's Wellbeing folder and chronology to flag up any concerns. Other receiving institutions are visited in like manner with the Wellbeing folder(s) and chronologies.
- Ensuring that all students entering the school arrive with complete safeguarding information (if any) from their previous school, and that any concerns found are talked-through with the previous school's staff.

## **INTIMATE CARE**

All students have the right to be safe and treated with dignity and respect. Their welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing.

The school's *Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines* (*see school website*) is designed to safeguard both students and staff, and apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of students.

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## **E-SAFETY**

The internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education and social interaction. The school has a duty to provide students with internet access as part of their learning experience, regardless of their learning disabilities and attainment levels.

Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum for all students nationally and a necessary learning tool for staff and students. Riverside students are included in this entitlement, although they need a specialist approach to e-learning, as they do in other curriculum areas.

Regular e-safety education and training at Riverside for students and their parents includes, when appropriate, helping students to keep safe using all forms of social media. (*see e-Safety Policy for full details*).

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection cases are confidential.
- The DSLs will only disclose information relating to the safeguarding of a student to colleagues, or other adults involved, strictly on a need-to-know basis.
- All adults involved in any child protection matter need to be aware that they have a responsibility to share information with their DSL and the relevant statutory agencies in order to safeguard all students at the school.
- All adults associated with the school need to be aware that they cannot promise any student to keep secret information that may be disclosed to them.

## **STAFF MOBILE PHONES**

### Use of personal mobile phones during school hours:

Personal mobile phones should not be used in class. If a text or an e-mail needs to be sent then it must be done away from the class. During breaks and lunchtimes, when not on duty, members of staff are free to use their personal mobile devices. If members of staff use their equipment in this way they are still expected to follow professional standards and abide by the school's social media policy. Senior staff are allowed to keep their mobile phones on during the school in case of emergencies.

### Photography using mobile phones:

Nearly all mobile phones have in-built cameras and that if used whilst at work, in school, an allegation could be made that a member of staff has taken inappropriate images with those cameras. Staff should always use school-owned cameras or tablets if taking photographs of children.

## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in the school's *Behaviour Management Policy (on school website)* and states that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that if used must be at all times the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person, as outlined in the Team-Teach training manuals.

The school always has at least two Team-Teach qualified trainers who can train and refresh staff in this area, as well as train staff groups from other schools/agencies. The majority of day staff (not SMSAs) have Medium Team-Teach accredited training, but the school ensures that there is also a group of at least ten staff who have the Advanced training, which includes training in ground-holds.

If school guidance, as outlined in the policy above, is not followed by any adult when undertaking a physical intervention, and injury or distress is caused to a student, action may be taken against the adult under child protection/disciplinary procedures.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Ensuring the health and safety of all students is paramount to the school's work. Overarching principles, approaches and details are summarised in the school's *Health and Safety Policy, on school website.*

A range of other signposted health and safety-related documents are filed in the school's central '*Policies and Procedures*' folders. These reflect the consideration we give to the protection of our students both within the school environment and when away from the site on educational trips and visits. (*Safeguarding of students during off-site visits is addressed through a comprehensive written risk assessment system*).

All establishments/centres/sites visited by the school provide their own health and safety policies and risk assessments for the school to scrutinise and file.

## **EXTENDED SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Students at Riverside can attend a range of after-school activities run by *Team Spirit at Riverside*. Team Spirit students can join an after-school club on any evening. These students begin their club time at the end of the school day but need to be picked up by their parent at 6:00 pm.

Students can also take up half-term and summer holiday club places. Activities continue from the after-school club menu, but with other activities added such as water sports and picnics. The school runs six weeks' clubs over the year, with the longer clubs in the summer holiday.

As an integral part of the school's provision, *Team Spirit at Riverside* are subject to all the school's policies, procedures and systems, including accountability to governors. The *Team Spirit at Riverside* manager is a qualified DSL and any safeguarding concerns at the after-school and holiday clubs are raised with her, following the school's reporting protocols. The *Team Spirit at Riverside* manager informs either the deputy head DSL or the headteacher DSL of any safeguarding developments and action taken at the earliest opportunity (usually the following morning or after the weekend) unless they are of sufficient seriousness to require immediate contact with one of these DSLs off-site by phone.

All students in year 11 have weekly off-site work experience placements on Thursdays throughout their last year of school to help them prepare for post-16 education and the world of work, future training or supported activities later as adults. Placements develop independence skills as well raising self-esteem and creating curriculum variety for these students. Students with high levels of independence can join the local 'Urban Futures' programme. The programme is linked to Haringey's Education/Business Partnership which receives funding from the Department of Work and Pensions to provide work experience placements in local businesses.

For individual independent students Urban Futures signs up to the school's safeguarding protocols in terms of vigilance and reporting any concerns for students on placements. Urban Futures also vet placements, ensuring that all adults have the required levels of

authorisation to work with these students, including DBS checks when required. Host placements taking groups of Riverside students accompanied by school support staff follow the same protocols and procedures, but the primary responsibility for the care of these students sits with the school staff.

Records of concerns are kept in the student's Wellbeing folder, unless the student is attending from another establishment, in which case notes are passed to them

## **OFF-SITE VISITS**

School day trips/visits form an important part of school life. All classes have regular sessions out into the community using the school minibuses, walking or local transport. These visits support the curriculum, provide opportunities to generalise skills taught in the class, and give our students a wider experience of the world. Parents give written permission for their student to attend these regular trips out as part of the student's induction process.

For day trips that sit outside the regular weekly trips out model, such as theatre, horse-riding and seaside visits, a comprehensive risk assessment is drawn up which is signed off by the headteacher. DBS and other checks are also carried out regarding other institutions as appropriate

Residential school journey places are offered to all students regardless of levels of complexity of need. These trips play an important role in developing social and independence skills as students move through the school towards preparation for transition to post-16 education. Residential trips also enhance aspects of the formal curriculum

For residential school journeys additional pre-documentation is drawn up which includes a requirement for a thorough scrutiny of all plans by the headteacher, chair of governors and the local authority's senior health and safety adviser, all of whom have to be satisfied that the trip has all necessary safety measures in place.

For further information see the school's [Educational Visits Policy on school website](#).

## **WHISTLE-BLOWING**

All staff are made aware of their duty to raise any concerns they may have, when held in good faith, regarding the attitude or actions of colleagues, whether in a safeguarding or other professional context. This awareness is reinforced through an annual staff training session and regular briefing reminders. (Haringey's school-staff [Whistle-blowing Policy on the school's website](#) is held in the school and can be readily accessed by any member of staff. It is also separately tabbed on the school website.

Through staff/adult awareness, reminders to higher-functioning students in PSHEE lessons and around the school, school council discussions, advocacy for more complex students and the provision of a 'Worry Box' by the headteacher's office,

students are also empowered to whistle-blow any concerns according to their capacity.

### **LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD (LSCB)**

Part of the role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is to raise awareness in the community of the importance of keeping children safe. It runs multi-agency training courses on child protection, specific to students with disabilities. This is to ensure that professionals know how to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect.

- All statutory agencies that work with children work to a common set of procedures. The Pan London Child Protection Procedures (2018 ) guide schools' practice to keep children safe across all London boroughs.
- The LSCB publishes practice guidance to help ensure that organisations do everything possible to check that staff are safe to work with students before they offer them employment. Haringey Council's Children and Young People's Service, (CYPS), has a team of social workers specifically for children with disabilities, (Disabled Children's Team), which includes a department to co-ordinate the transition to adult services.
- A child protection advisor links directly to this team to provide guidance around child protection concerns.
- The NHS Whittington in Haringey Trust employs health visitors and doctors with specialist knowledge of children with disabilities. (*Riverside has a full-time school nurse*).

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION**

The application of rigorous procedures for the recruitment of any staff who come into contact with students at Riverside, both directly and indirectly, reduces risk to students and also the likelihood of unfounded allegations of abuse being made.

*The following standards are applied:*

- At least one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the school will have had certificated safer recruitment training;
- At least one governor of the school will have had certificated safer recruitment training wherever possible within the recommended two years;

At least one member of every interview panel at the school will have had certificated safer recruitment training wherever possible within the recommended two years;

- All prospective workers (paid and unpaid) are required to complete an application form which asks for details of their previous employment; any gaps are robustly

challenged and appointments not made unless satisfactory explanations are accepted;

- Applicants must give the names and contact details of two referees, one of whom must be the most recent employer, and all appointments are provisional dependent on the receipt of satisfactory references; referees are reminded that references should not omit to say things that might be relevant to their employment, and must state whether there have ever been any concerns around safeguarding in relation to the candidate concerned, (see Appendix 2)
- All prospective workers (paid and unpaid) can only begin work at the school once a DBS check has been undertaken. This allows the person to work temporarily in a supervised fashion with students, (i.e. senior staff are informed that this is the case for each individual person);
- All prospective workers, (paid and unpaid), then have to have a new Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service), certificate before they can graduate to unsupervised work with students;
- All appointments to work at Riverside are subject to an agreed probationary period;
- New members of staff are clear about their responsibilities and work to an agreed Job description. As part of their induction they must provide evidence of having read the first chapter of '*Keeping children safe in education*' (DfE September, 2016). A signed evidence list is kept for all adults working at the school to this effect.

### **SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR) / DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS)**

The school follows all regulations regarding the holding and maintenance of a Single Central Record for all staff/adults working at the school as a guarantee that all Riverside or visiting staff/adults are fully checked as required before there is any contact with students. The SCR is checked by the governor responsible for safeguarding on at least an annual basis.

All employed staff are required to have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) before commencement of employment at the school. Students and volunteers can work at the school once inducted by a senior member of staff but only in a supervised fashion. Volunteers incorporated into more than one session per week will also need an Enhanced DBS, as will all governors.

#### **Attachments to the Single Central Record itself are:**

- Woodside SCR
- DSL evidence and dates of training.
- Debarred checklist for governors, students and volunteers.
- Staff references checklist.
- Staff/governors addresses and telephone numbers.
- Evidence of teachers' qualifications
- Staff authorised to use positive handling

- Student wellbeing monitoring list
- Head's Annual Safeguarding Reports to Governors
- Nominated Safeguarding Governors Annual Report
- Safer recruitment - evidence and dates of training.
- Whole school staff – evidence of safeguarding training with dates.
- Haringey Section 11 Safeguarding Audit
- Whittington in Haringey DBS checks.
- Agency supply DBS checklist.
- CYPS – DBS arrangements.

### **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF/OTHER ADULTS**

Should a student make an allegation against a member of staff or other adult in the school, or a member of staff/other adult make an allegation against another member of staff/other adult on behalf of a student, the following steps will be taken:

- Either the member of staff against whom the allegation is made, or any other person receiving or making the allegation will immediately inform the headteacher.
- The headteacher will immediately raise the details of the allegation with the lead LA Child Protection Officer with Responsibility for Managing Allegations against Staff, (the LADO), agree next steps and follow all LA procedures and protocols throughout the process.
- If the allegation concerns the headteacher, the other school DSL(s) will immediately inform the Chair of Governors of the school who will consult with the lead LA Child Protection Officer with Responsibility for Managing Allegations Against Staff as outlined above.

### **SUPPORTING STAFF/OTHER ADULTS**

The school recognises that adults working in the school who have become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and distressing.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with one of the school's DSLs and by referring on for further support as appropriate.

## **APPENDIX 1:**

### **RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE**

It can often be difficult to recognise abuse. The signs listed in these guidelines are only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Our students may behave strangely or seem unhappy for many reasons, as they move through the stages of childhood or their families experience changes. It is nevertheless important to know what could indicate that abuse is taking place and to be alert to the need to consult further.

Someone can abuse a child by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting, by telephone or on the Internet. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to a child or by a complete stranger.

There are four accepted Universal Categories of Abuse. Core definitions of these are listed below, with additional information in each case.

#### **1. NEGLECT**

*Neglect involves 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 and development.*

*This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.*

Symptoms of physical and emotional neglect can include:

- Inadequate supervision; being left alone for long periods of time
- lack of stimulation, social contact or education
- Inadequate nutrition, leading to ill-health
- Constant hunger; stealing or gorging food
- Failure to seek or to follow medical advice such that a child's life development is endangered
- Inappropriate clothing for conditions

#### **2. PHYSICAL**

*Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child*

*It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness in a child.*

Symptoms that indicate physical abuse include:

- Bruising in or around the mouth, on the back, buttocks or rectal area
- Finger mark bruising or grasp marks on the limbs or chest of a small child
- Bites

- Burn or scald marks; small round burns that could be caused by a cigarette
- Fractures to arms, legs or ribs in a small child
- Numbers of scars of different sizes or ages

Particular forms of physical abuse that can be experienced by students with very complex disabilities include:

- Force-feeding
- Unjustified or excessive physical restraint
- Rough handling
- Restraining a child without knowing how to do so safely.
- Extreme behaviour modification including the deprivation of medication, food, clothing or essential equipment
- Misuse of medication, sedation, heavy tranquillisers
- Invasive procedures that are carried out by people without the right skills or against a child's will
- Deliberate failure to follow medically recommended regimes
- Misapplication of programmes or regimes including care regimes and therapy programmes
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g. calipers, sleep board which may cause injury or pain, inappropriate splinting

Some risk factors to be noted:

- A need for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care from what may be a number of carers
- Carers and staff lacking the ability to communicate adequately with the child
- A lack of continuity in care leading to an increased risk that behavioural changes may go unnoticed.
- Physical dependency with consequent reduction in ability to be able to resist abuse
- An increased likelihood that the child is socially isolated
- Lack of access to 'keep safe' strategies available to others
- Communication or learning difficulties preventing disclosure
- Parents own needs and ways of coping may conflict with the needs of the student

### **3. EMOTIONAL**

*Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.*

Emotional abuse may involve:

- causing children to feel frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic violence
- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations
- exploitation or corruption of children

Symptoms that of emotional abuse may include:

- excessively clingy or attention-seeking behaviour
- very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- excessively withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness; a 'frozen watchfulness'
- despondency
- lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- eating disorder

#### **4. SEXUAL**

*Sexual abuse involves 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 and includes penetrative, (i.e. vaginal or anal rape), and non-penetrative acts.*

*It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.*

Encouraging children to act in sexually inappropriate ways is also abusive. Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, any sexual activity – contact or non-contact – with a child under the age of 13 is a crime.

Symptoms of sexual abuse can include:

- allegations or disclosure
- genital soreness, injuries or discomfort
- sexually transmitted diseases; urinary infections
- excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; inappropriately sexualised play, words or drawing
- a child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- repeated sleep disturbances through nightmares and/or wetting

Older students may additionally exhibit:

- depression
  - drug and/or alcohol abuse
  - eating disorders; obsessive behaviours
  - self-harm; suicide attempts
  - school/peer/relationship problems
  - Other forms of abuse:
-

**APPENDIX 2:**

**RIVERSIDE INITIAL INCIDENT/DISCLOSURE FORM**

**Confidential**

All allegations, complaints or suspicions of abuse should be recorded as close to the time of the incident as possible. Details of incidents should be recorded in as much detail as possible, and as accurately as possible. Any disclosure of abuse being made by students should be a reflection of what was actually said. Do not try and interpret any of the information, just record what was said/witnessed. Refer to Riverside’s written guidance or speak to the school’s DSL’s (Designated Safeguarding Leads) for further advice.

Please note, this form is to be used only when staff are reporting a concern about a child for the first time. (Subsequent reports can be in note form only).

1. **Student’s Details**

Name: .....Class:.....

Date of Birth: .....

2. **Date and Time of Incident or Disclosure**

3. **Presentation of Student** (physical, emotional, behavioural. Indicate if any visible marks/injuries)

4. **Details of what happened or disclosure of allegations.** (do not interpret information. Use the same language that was used by the young person or child). Are you reporting your own concerns or those reported by someone else?

5. **Which DSL will you be giving this form to?**

*2-sided form (PTO)*

6. **Any other relevant information:**

7. **Name, role and contact details of person completing form.**

**Name:**

**Role:**

**Contact**

**Details:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

---

**Action taken by DSL:** (If no action was taken, explain why):

**DSL (Name):**

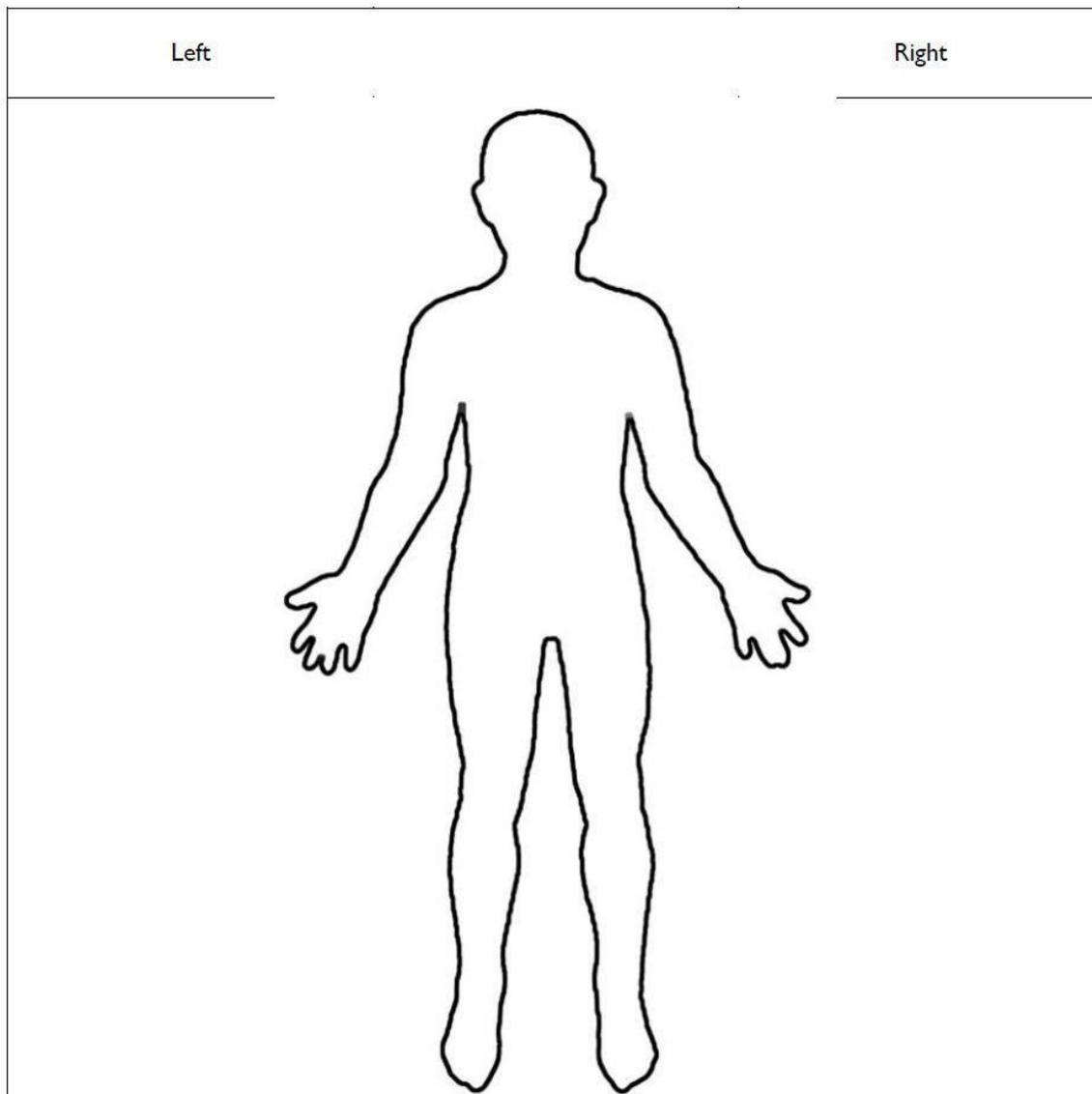
**Date:**

**This form should be kept in an individual safeguarding folder in a locked cupboard, in compliance with school arrangements.**

Skin map – used by non-medical staff to assist you in reporting your concerns.  
Please highlight:

Front view

Back view



Action: To be completed by the designated person for child protection

**THIS IS A DOUBLE-SIDED SHEET**

Any discussion to be recorded separately on a note of discussion sheet.

**APPENDIX 3:**

**GENERIC SCHOOL REFERENCE REQUEST LETTER**

Date

**STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear

**Re:**

The above named person has made an application for the post of ..... at Riverside School, and has submitted your name as a referee.

I should be grateful for your opinion as to the applicant's character and suitability for appointment to this post.

Please note references are taken up **before** the start of an employment offer and I should be grateful for your opinion as to the applicant's character and suitability for appointment to this post as soon as possible.

***Please respond to each of the following questions:***

1. Relationships with children, colleagues and parents.
2. Quality of teaching (if applicable).
3. Any other particular strengths and abilities.
4. Whether or not this candidate has had any disciplinary action taken against them, or has any action pending.
5. ***Whether or not you have any concerns regarding this candidate in terms of the welfare and safeguarding of children.***
6. Whether or not you have any reservations about recommending this candidate for the post (if yes please specify)

*I should like to draw your attention that this Authority's policy is to place references given for a successful candidate on a file which is open to the employee, unless the referee specifically states that the reference is to be kept confidential.*

Please supply reference as an attachment, scanned and signed onto headed paper if replying by email, I thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely

Martin Doyle  
Headteacher