



CHILD PROTECTION (SENIOR SCHOOL)

Deborah Meiklejohn, Senior Deputy Rector in the Senior School acts as the Child Protection Co-ordinator. She reports directly to the Rector.

It is the policy of The Edinburgh Academy, and the responsibility of all teaching and support staff, to promote good practice in relation to the protection of all the children in the School and for dealing with allegations of abuse.

Such allegations may be against parents, teachers, carer, any other adult, another child or young person. Children may be harmed by a parent, sibling or other relative, other children or young people, a carer or staff member, an acquaintance or a stranger.

No allegations of abuse even if 'in confidence' should be dismissed out of hand. They must be taken seriously and the confidant has the responsibility to help and support the child, whose welfare is paramount.

Staff **MUST** be familiar with the following policy statements:

- i) child protection
- ii) confidentiality
- iii) bullying

1. **ABUSE:**

Child abuse can include both

- Acts of commission and
 - Acts of omission
- a) **Physical abuse** - actual or likely physical injury to a child
 - b) **Neglect** - the persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, or failure to carry out importance aspects of care.
 - c) **Emotional abuse**- the persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection of a child.
 - d) **Sexual abuse** - actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child who may be either dependent and/or developmentally immature.

Allegations of abuse may be made by

- The child
- Any person who has knowledge of a suspicion that a child is suffering significant harm.
- Members of the public, those working directly or indirectly with child or family members.

All allegations should be referred to the Child Protection Co-ordinator or to the Rector if the allegation is about the Senior Deputy Rector. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will report immediately to the Rector.

2. INITIAL RESPONSE - CHECKLIST

Staff should **OBSERVE, R E C O R D** and **REPORT**

- Respond without showing signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock.
- Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset.
- Confidentiality should not be promised to children or adults.
- Observe carefully the behaviour or demeanour of the child or the person expressing concern.
- Record in detail what you have seen and heard.

- Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations; rather encourage the child to say what he or she wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.

And then **REPORT** to the Child Protection Co-ordinator on the same day as the concerns arise.

Information about the allegation must not be shared with any person other than the Child Protection Co-ordinator or the Rector.

REMEMBER - Keep contemporaneous notes and make a record of them on the same working day.

3. INVESTIGATION

It is recognised that allegations can be made mistakenly, whether or not for frivolous or malicious reasons, which can jeopardise and damage irretrievably the career of an adult. However all such allegations must be considered to be possible of substantiation until otherwise proved.

- The Senior Deputy Rector as Child Protection Co-ordinator will judge whether or not an allegation concerns possible abuse.
- A co-ordination meeting may be convened to collate information about the child.
- If the allegation or concern indicates possible abuse, the Senior Deputy Rector will discuss the situation with the appropriate representative of the Social Work Department.
- If it is decided that an investigation is called for, the responsibility then rest with the Social Work Department.
- At this stage the Police would normally become involved.

DKM
6th October 2009