

John Masefield High School

Safeguarding Children Policy

What is the background to this policy?

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The statutory guidance on the duty, which was first issued in 2005, has been updated. The revised version was published in April 2007.

There are some key features of effective arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children which all agencies will need to take account of, in accordance with the relevant section. These arrangements will help agencies to create and maintain an organisational culture and ethos that reflects the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. At an organisational or strategic level, these key features are having:

1. Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
2. A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children, available for all staff
3. A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
4. Service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare, and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families
5. Training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or in contact with, children and families
6. Safe recruitment procedures in place
7. Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
8. Effective information sharing

Aims of the Policy

The aim of the Safeguarding Children Policy is to ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations and has effective arrangements in place to meet the key features.

Key Features

1. Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare

All members of the Senior Leadership Team at JMHS are committed to the importance of safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare. This commitment is also shared by all members of JMHS staff. Our prospectus states that the central aim of our Headteacher, Andrew Evans, is "for every student at John Masefield High School to experience excellent and enjoyable learning and, as a result, to achieve as well as he or she possibly can. We place a strong emphasis on recognising and celebrating each student's achievements. I believe that a strong and supportive partnership with parents is crucial to students' happiness and success. This is achieved through regular communication about progress, and our excellent pastoral care system. Good discipline and civilised behaviour are vital for effective learning. Our school rules, based on rights and responsibilities, have been agreed by all members of our school. Discipline is achieved through a firm but fair system called 'behaviour for learning', which is consistently applied by all members of staff'.

2. A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children, available for all staff

JMHS has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and all staff working make a valuable contribution to the safeguarding and promoting of children's welfare. Staff play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect by early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm and by educating children about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum. We aim to create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people, and are able to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns.

We have a suite of policies that inform and direct our work in this area:

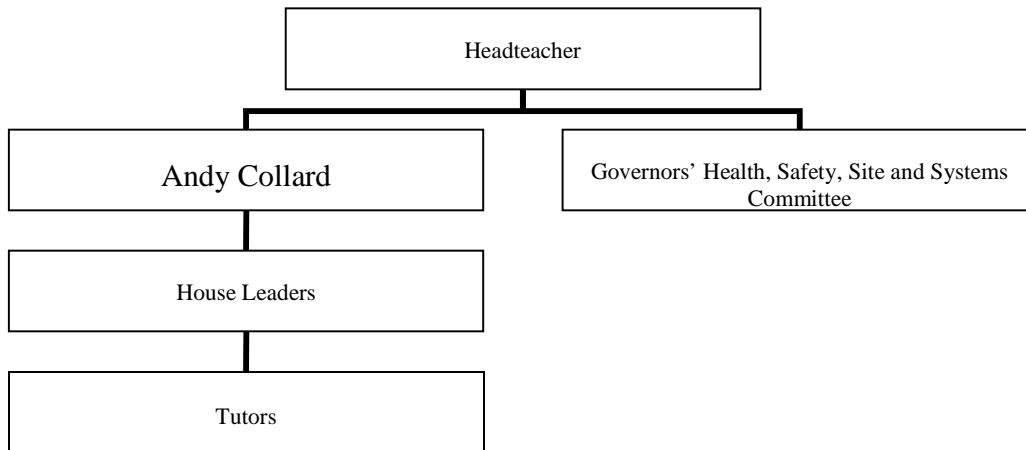
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Staff Guide to the House system
- Risk Management Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Race Equality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Citizenship Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Food Policy
- Whistleblowing/Confidential reporting Policy
- SEN Policy
- Tackling Underachievement Policy
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement Programme
- Disability Equality Document
- Accessibility Plan

These policies are updated regularly, are subject to staff consultation and are available in a variety of formats (ie hard or soft copies). Signed copies of policies approved by Governors are kept by the Clerk to Governors.

3. A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Andy Collard, Deputy Headteacher, is the school's Designated Child Protection Teacher. If he is not available information should be passed to the appropriate House Leader, or directly to the Headteacher.

The following chart shows our line of accountability:



Both formal and informal advice is sought from the Safeguarding Team at Herefordshire Council.

Our House system is the key means of pastoral care and guidance support for every child at our school. One of the central aims of the House system is to ensure that each student has a key supporter, mentor and guide, who liaises with the student's teacher and family and provides strong and consistent support. The form tutor is ideally placed to play a crucial role in supporting individual students, talking to students about progress and liaising with parents. We have reduced our average class size to 18-19 students per class; these smaller class sizes will enable tutors to give much more individual support.

The House system also enables older students to take on positions of responsibility and encourages friendly competition between houses.

4. Service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare, and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families

The curriculum deals with safeguarding in two ways. Firstly, the curriculum, in subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education discusses relevant issues with the children. Topics include such themes as Drugs, Alcohol, Sex and Relationships, and Stranger Danger and are delivered on Challenge Days by staff and appropriate visiting specialists. Children are encouraged to explore and discuss these issues.

Secondly, the curriculum is designed so that safety issues within the subject are discussed and safe practices taught, such as using equipment properly in PE and Design and Technology. At all times there has to be appropriate staffing levels.

Each House Support Assistant and the Sixth Form Administrative Assistant have received training (or is scheduled to receive training) to co-ordinate external visits and they are responsible for completing

assessment forms with the trip organizer and entering them onto the EVOLVE system. This is completed prior to the trip commencing and is authorised by the Headteacher.

Surveys of staff, pupils and parents contribute to our development and information is shared in a variety of ways (ie newsletters, website, letters home, mentoring, one-to-one meetings with parents, student council).

5. Training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or in contact with, children and families

All new staff and student teachers have planned induction programmes which includes a wide range of issues including SEN and disability, child protection awareness and appropriate response. This is delivered by qualified JMHS staff or INSET provided for NQTs by the Children and Young People's Directorate.

Teaching assistants meet regularly with the SENCO to discuss students and to develop effective strategies to enable students to make maximum progress. We have an Assistant Senco who also acts as our Vulnerable Students Co-ordinator. The SENCO is also involved in a national pilot to develop the provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement and we have a designated GRT Co-ordinator.

The House Team Leaders and the Assistant Headteachers responsible for KS3 and KS4 meet formally with the Headteacher once a week as a team to develop strategic thinking.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have undertaken training on safeguarding children. We held an Inset day in July 2008 for all staff on anti-bullying and ensuring that all children are safe from harm.

6. Safe recruitment procedures in place

Recruitment

The Personnel Officer (Lin Maguire) ensures the school complies with the Children and Young People's Directorate guidelines re recruitment. She has drawn up a general recruitment procedure for use by all staff involved in recruitment. This covers advertising, shortlisting, invitations to interview, interview process, what to do at the end of an interview and general guidance.

Enhanced CRB Disclosures

In order to comply with DCSF requirements, the Central Staff Record was set up in September 2006 and is updated each time a new member of staff is appointed or a member of staff leaves.

All new members of staff (whether temporary, permanent or casual), volunteers and governors are required to complete a CRB Criminal Records Disclosure form for clearance at Enhanced Level, provide the necessary documentation as proof of identity, (together with proof of educational qualifications if applicable) and the form is then forwarded to Herefordshire Council for onward transmission.

Staff appointed prior to the inception of the CRB, ie 1 March 2002, are also required to have completed a CRB Disclosure form and this has been carried out for all staff at JMHS. There is now a rolling programme in place through Herefordshire Council for all staff to be re-checked every three years.

As far as John Masefield High School is concerned, all the necessary checks have been carried out and the Central Staff Record is complete.

It contains:

- List of all staff
- List of invigilators
- List of governing body
- Letters and guidance from the DfES/DCFS
- CRB clearance documents received from Herefordshire Council

Supply staff who are used from Herefordshire Council have been the subject of clearance through them. Any agency supply staff are required to bring their CRB clearance document and proof of identity with them when they come into school. In addition, any agency used is required to provide details of the method of checking they use. The Cover Co-ordinator verifies this as required.

Additionally, we have two outside contractors in school at the moment, ie Churchill Contract Services and Shire Services Limited. It is a requirement of the contract that all staff employed by them have a CRB clearance, which we are able to check at any time. This is done on a regular basis by the School Business Manager.

7. Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Good relationships have been developed with a wide range of outside agencies as well as the Children and Young People's Directorate Safeguarding Children Team in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These include the police service, social services, West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Travelling Children (WMCES), CLD Youth Counselling Trust, medical services, local youth services, BST, PSI, EAL, behaviour support team, physical support team, English and second language support and Zigzag (Drug Support). We have a joint initiative with a local GP and School Nurse (Clinic4Us) which is held every Monday lunchtime and offers a confidential medical services to all students.

Many of the above agencies visit the school on a regular basis to offer support and some also provide assemblies on appropriate issues or guest speakers for Challenge Days.

8. Effective information sharing

As stated above, we have good relationships with a wide range of agencies and work together to ensure we have a co-ordinated approach to dealing with the wellbeing of children and young people. Wellbeing is defined in terms of the 5 outcomes of being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Wendy Bradbeer
School Business Manager
January 2009

Updated by Wendy Bradbeer and Lin Maguire – September 2009

Signed Headteacher Date

Signed Chair of Governors Date