



BIRKENHEAD SCHOOL

Summary Safeguarding Policy

Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to protect them from neglect and abuse (including identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action).

Safeguarding students at School is the responsibility of the whole community and we must all be vigilant. Never think that child abuse could not happen here or to our students.

There are various forms of child abuse including physical harm, psychological harm, neglect, sexual abuse.

The possible signs of abuse and neglect can include:

Bruising; scarring; bandages and plasters; rubbing part of the body; abstaining from physical activities and avoiding using the changing room at school; apathy; withdrawal from social contact; loss of enthusiasm and energy; tearfulness; missing school or frequently late; socially withdrawn; untidy and unkempt; infrequent mention of parents and family life; slow emotional development; overly self-reliant; poor learning progress, low self-esteem, unease or unusual behaviour with adults, mood swings; changes in emotional wellbeing; self-harming; drug and alcohol misuse; changes in behaviour; displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour; and appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Children can also be adversely affected by other safeguarding issues, including criminal and sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and honour-based violence. Children can be abused by other children, as well as by adults. Peer-on-peer abuse and peer sexual harassment can take many forms and some types can be gender specific. It can include bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse, use of pejorative language, sexual violence and harassment, sexting, upskirting, initiation rituals, and serious violence. At Birkenhead School every member of the community must be vigilant and stand up against any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation or disability. Any 'banter' must be stopped and reported. All students should feel able to approach any member of staff, or senior students to report any such behaviour. Any allegations, however apparently minor, that point to being a victim or witness of peer on peer abuse or sexual harassment or violence must be reported. All students should feel safe and confident in reporting concerns.

The School has a team of Designated Safeguarding Leads. The names and contact details are set out below. They are led by the Assistant Head Pastoral (Graham Murdoch), who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the whole School.

Your Duty to Report

If you have any concerns about a child (including concerns regarding possible peer-on-peer abuse and concerns about how another member of staff is behaving towards a child) you should report the matter straight away to the Assistant Head Pastoral (telephone 01516513002) or one of the School's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (whose contact details are at the end of this document). The Assistant Head Pastoral's office is on the middle floor of the Lodge

Alternatively, you can report the matter direct to Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership: **0151 606 2008**. All reports or concerns must be added to MyConcern as soon as possible after disclosure.

What should you do if a child tells you that they are being abused

Operational staff have less contact and conversation with students than teaching staff. It is, however, possible that a child may say something to you that indicates that they are suffering from some form of abuse. If this happens you should:

- Ask them their name
- Listen calmly and patiently
- Take the matter seriously and reassure the child
- Tell the child what will happen next (i.e. that you will need to speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead about it)

When speaking to the child in this situation:

Do not ask leading or closed questions, do not judge or condemn the alleged abuser, do not assume you know how the child feels and do not promise to keep things secret. As soon as the child has finished speaking to you, you should then immediately report the matter to a Designated Safeguarding Lead and complete a log in MyConcern.

Strangers on Campus

All staff need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others who may wish to harm a student in School or students travelling to and from School and must take all reasonable steps to lessen such risks. If you see intruders or suspicious strangers on School property or approaching students, you should immediately report the matter to a member of the Estates team or to Reception. All staff, volunteers and visitors should wear lanyards for identification.

Relationships with Students

Staff should not establish or seek to establish friendships or social contact with students. Staff should not give students their personal mobile numbers or personal email addresses. Staff should avoid being alone with a student. Staff should only enter changing areas when this is part of a duty to which they have been assigned, and should follow the accompanying guidelines. Staff should not enter students' toilets or showers cubicles. Staff should ensure their social media is private and cannot be accessed by students. Staff should not use their personal devices to photograph or record students.

Low-Level Concerns

Colleagues should feel able to report feelings of unease about the behaviour of adults on-site towards children. This does not need to be an allegation, it could be a feeling or instinct. Adults could refer to teachers, support staff, caterers, contractors or visitors (such as those hiring the premises). This should be reported to the DSL or, if it's about the DSL, to the Headmaster.

Please read this policy in conjunction with:

- KCSIE 2025
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Graham Murdoch	gwm@birkenheadschool.co.uk 102	Middle Floor Lodge
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Prep)	Richard Halpin	rah@birkenheadschool.co.uk 183	Prep Office
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Pre-Prep & Little School)	Steph Ford	sf@birkenheadschool.co.uk 188	Little School
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Nursery)	Tina Ross	tlr@birkenheadschool.co.uk 199	Nursery
Head of Overdale	Sharon Tharme	slt@birkenheadschool.co.uk 103	Middle Floor Overdale
Head of Middle School	Rupert Rule	rar@birkenheadschool.co.uk 175	McAllester office or first floor 6 th Form Block
Head of Sixth Form	Louise Smeaton	ls@birkenheadschool.co.uk 105	Sixth Form Centre
School Nurse	Debbie Cox	dhc@birkenheadschool.co.uk 631	Medical Centre in Prep Main Building

Reviewed Graham Murdoch 25th September 2025

To be reviewed September 2026