



H.E.C.T. Safeguarding Children Policy

Principles

The governing body (Trustees) of the Hellenic Education Cultural Trust (HECT) recognises and accepts its responsibilities for child protection. It has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will work to ensure that all who come into contact with young people recognise an obligation to protect and safeguard their welfare. The aim of this Policy is putting the best interest of children first.

We will take account of the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (Barnet Safeguarding Children Board) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education.

Our policy applies to all staff, Trustees and volunteers working in the school.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

We will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection (Michalis Ellinas) as well as a deputy DSL to act in the designated Safeguarding Lead's absence (Aikaterini Papakonstantinou, teacher). The DSL and deputy DSL will receive appropriate training and support for their role.

The DSL and deputy DSL are the first points of contact and will coordinate safeguarding procedures in the school.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL and deputy DSL are not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to any teacher or Trustee and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. Advice can also be sought at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of governors and staff (including teacher assistants) who work with children

We will ensure safe recruitment practises are always followed.

All staff (including assistants) and Trustees will be subject to Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks when appointed.

We ask staff (including assistants) and Trustees to inform us prior to appointment if any of the following reasons under which a person may be disqualified from working in our school under the 2009 Regulations apply. Staff (including assistants) and Trustees also have the obligation to let us know if circumstances change at any point in time.

- They are on the Children's Barred List (for which the School will carry out a Disclosure and Barring System check)
- They have been cautioned for or convicted of certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults
- There are grounds relating to the care of children (including where an order is made in respect of a child under a person's care, including their own children)
- They have had registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or been disqualified from private fostering

We will keep an up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR) which summarises the checks and vetting of all staff (including assistants) working with pupils and school Trustees.

Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe

The school relies on mainstream education to provide opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe e.g. e-safety, peer-on-peer abuse, upskirting and have regard to the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), and other wider environmental factors (contextualising safeguarding). The school will support and/or reinforce acquiring such skills through appropriate messaging and reminders during assemblies and lessons.

We maintain and review our strategies to monitor any infringements to the acceptable use of technology guidelines, which are operative in the school, and take appropriate steps to deal with these and the perpetrators.

Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse

We recognise that because of the regular contact with children, school staff, volunteers and Trustees are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Ensure all staff (including assistants), Trustees and key members of the Parents Association understand their responsibilities of being alert to the signs of abuse, responding and reacting appropriately. Also, to react in accordance with annual training, to disclosures made by

children; taking responsibility for referring any and all concerns to the DSL and to the Police if statutorily required and/or to party set out in the relevant Policy in the case of allegations against staff.

- Implement annual staff training (including coverage of whistleblowing) and provide frequent updates to evidence this outcome. Staff will be asked to sign that they have read and understood the relevant material. Safeguarding is also covered in new staff induction.
- Ensure staff are aware that anybody can make a referral to social care if there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child.
- Ensure staff are alert to children that are missing in education and their responsibilities to report any concerns to the DSL because of the potential dangers that include but are not limited to child sexual exploitation.
- Ensure all staff recognise that some are more vulnerable to abuse than others (e.g. special educational needs (SEN) and Looked After Children (LAC) pupils) and that they should be especially vigilant for signs of abuse.

Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

The school will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations (e.g. on the school website).
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure we have a nominated Trustee responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and Trustee knows the name of the DSL responsible for child protection and their role and is cognisant of the school's policy and procedures.
- Ensure we have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers and that we follow these procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities for maintaining professional relationships with students and avoid communicating with students privately, e.g. by email. Nor should staff interact with pupils on social media or put themselves into potentially compromising situations.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for recognising and dealing with peer-on-peer abuse. They should also report and challenge derogatory or sexualised language and report to the designated safeguarding lead any incidents that come to their

attention of sexual harassment, sexting, upskirting and other abuse on social media. Abuse is abuse and 'banter' or similar excuses are not acceptable; any reported cases will be heard and taken seriously. Victims will be supported.

- Keep written records of concerns; log the details of meetings with any outside agencies (e.g. Social Services) about children and refer all matters immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

We will work with any outside agencies (such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service) to co-operate as required with any enquiries and to assist in supporting children who have been abused or witnessed violence, if/as requested and mutually agreed.

We recognise that the school may be the only / one of only few stable, secure and predictable elements in the lives of children at risk. The school ethos will promote a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued. The school will also ensure that pupils know that some behaviours are unacceptable. If they report such behaviours they will be listened to, valued and will not be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

This policy is subject to Annual Review.

Approved by the school Trustees 11th Sep 2024