



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY and CODE OF CONDUCT

UPDATED June 2025

(To be reviewed August 2026)

RATIONALE

Child protection must be seen within the wider context of supporting families and meeting children's needs through GIRFEC. GIRFEC:

- puts children's needs first;
- ensures that children are listened to and understand decisions that affect them; and
- ensures that they get the appropriate co-ordinated support needed to promote, support and safeguard their wellbeing, health and development.

GIRFEC requires that all services for children and young people and adult services working with parents and carers of children and young people – including social work, health, education, police, housing and third sector services – adapt and streamline their systems and practices so that, where necessary, they can work together better to support children and young people. This includes strengthening arrangements for information-sharing. The approach encourages earlier intervention by practitioners to avoid crisis situations at a later date and ensures that children and young people get the help they need when they need it. With its emphasis on shared assessment based on common language, it facilitates information-sharing and stresses the importance of understanding risks and needs across all aspects of the child's wellbeing.

These principles, enshrined in legislation and practice in child protection, are derived from National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and the Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government and endorsed by the Scottish Government. They should underpin all code and practice in child protection. These principles include:

- Each child has a right to be treated as an individual.
- Every child who can form a view on matters affecting them has the right to express those views if they so wish, and those views should be given due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity.
- Parents should normally be responsible for the upbringing of their children and should share that responsibility.
- Each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Insofar as is consistent with safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare, public authorities should promote the upbringing of children by their families.
- Any intervention by a public authority in the life of a child must be properly justified and should be supported by services from all relevant agencies working in collaboration.

At Regius School all staff, including teaching staff, learning assistants, visiting specialists, and admin support staff, will be trained and updated in Child Protection Policy and Procedure every year. This training will include updates on categories of abuse and understanding of risk factors for children, and overview of current child protection legislation. The Child Protection Handbook is an accompanying document to this policy and contains useful supplementary information to assist you in fulfilling your child protection role. Trustees of Regius School will be PVG registered scheme members and will also complete relevant child protection training, so that they are able to make informed decisions that affect vulnerable beneficiaries.

All staff are expected to use the GIRFEC Wellbeing indicators to identify concerns for children they regard at risk. All concerns should be discussed with the Headteacher and then, if appropriate, recorded on the Wellbeing Concern form.

The School Procedure and Key Contacts information will be displayed prominently throughout the school.



REGIUS SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

- All staff have a duty to protect children from risk and harm.
- ***If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.***
- All staff are expected to raise concerns they have with either the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and if relevant, record any concerns they have on the Wellbeing Concern form referencing the SHANARRI wheel to categorise the nature of their concern.
- The DSL will monitor and collate all wellbeing concerns and take appropriate action.
- The DSL will keep you informed of any action taken.
- Pupil chronologies should be updated to note wellbeing concerns.
- If a child discloses information which you consider to be a child protection matter, stay calm and follow the Guidelines for Responding:

Guidelines for Responding

First	Listen with care. Do not prompt or suggest an answer. Use open-ended questions to establish the facts then STOP
Second	Reassure the child that you know it is not his/her fault
Third	Do not show disbelief
Fourth	Do not give a guarantee of confidentiality
Fifth	Take the allegation seriously

Procedure for dealing with a Disclosure

- **A guarantee of confidentiality must not be given to the child**
- Any discussion must be limited to establishing basic facts
- Tell the child that the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will have to be informed
- Record the basic facts (handwritten) as accurately as possible in the child's own words, signed and dated on the day of disclosure
- Refer immediately to the DSL or, in her absence, the DDSL
- You will be kept informed of the outcome of the disclosure.

In circumstances where there is a significant concern that a child or young person has, or is at risk of being harmed or abused, the school is required to pass information to Social Work Department colleagues who have a legal duty to investigate further.

The DSL will make an Initial Child Protection Referral to the Duty Social Worker as detailed on the Child Protection contact sheet.

A record of all calls must be made to ensure accuracy in reporting and follow up investigations.



KEY CONTACTS

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Rachel Meldrum Headteacher mrs.meldrum@regius.edin.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Sarah Sharp Deputy Headteacher mrs.sharp@regius.edin.sch.uk

SOCIAL WORK CONTACT DETAILS

Edinburgh Social Care Direct	0131 200 2324
West Lothian Social Care: Broxburn: Bathgate:	0150 628 4440 0150 628 4700
East Lothian:	0187 582 4090
Borders	0189 666 2787
Midlothian - Children and Families	0131 271 3413

OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY SOCIAL WORK

East and Midlothian and Edinburgh: 0800 731 6969
West Lothian Out of hours (SCET): 0150 628 1028
Fife: 0345 155 0099
Sick Kids Hospital Edinburgh: 0131 536 0000
(ask for person responsible for Child Protection)

POLICE

Police Scotland 101 or 999
Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

ADVICE LINE

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000



Code of Conduct for Staff

Staff interactions with pupils must be transparent and staff should always be wary of allowing situations to develop which could lead to allegations of impropriety.

Physical Touch

The climate of suspicion that has developed regarding child abuse poses a real dilemma for adults in caring positions. In order to protect children from abuse, and staff from suspicions of abuse, the natural inclination to comfort and reassure children through physical contact needs a considered assessment of the situation. This does not mean that physical contact is never permissible. It does mean that adults touching children must operate within understood limits, and that contact outwith those limits must be a considered response which can be justified if necessary.

Where those limits lie will vary according to the age of the child and the role of the member of staff. A young child may well require to be comforted and reassured. Any touching or comforting should be age appropriate, context specific, preferably done within the vision of others and prompted by the needs of the child, not those of the staff.

One would expect the need and desirability of such contact with older pupils to be considerably less, although even in these circumstances situations could arise in which it would be a natural and human occurrence. The death of a pupil, for example, might make it natural for pupils and teachers to grieve together and touching would be neither unusual nor undesirable, so long as it was agreeable to both parties and limited.

It would be impossible to lay down rigid rules about what is and is not permissible. Awareness-raising through in-service training should provide opportunities for staff to explore acceptable limits through discussion of case scenarios. Common sense is a good guide, but it must be informed by common sense. Too generous limits which can be operated satisfactorily by some can be exploited by others with less worthy motives. The difficulty in laying down clear limits makes it all the more important that schools make every effort to ensure that all staff who have contact with pupils are carefully selected and all appropriate checks completed.

One-to-One Situations

Opportunities for abuse exist in all schools, especially in one-to-one situations, e.g., one-to-one tuition, guidance interviews, sick rooms.



The simplest advice would be to try, as far as possible, to avoid being alone with a child or young person.

In some instances, this is unrealistic, e.g., where a young child needs help with toileting.

There are also instances where it might be seen as beneficial for a child to have some opportunity for one-to-one contact with an adult.

- Where one-to-one contact is appropriate, it should be timetabled and, where possible, held with others around or within earshot or view of others.
- Never have the door locked and, wherever possible, maintain a gap/barrier between you and the child.
- Another member of staff should be aware of any meeting and its purpose.
- Do not meet pupils off school premises or invite them to your home.
- Most one-to-one meetings will be straightforward and uneventful. But where the meeting is difficult, fraught, tense, and accusatory or the pupil becomes distressed, the adult must record details and inform a senior manager of the incident.
- If in doubt about a meeting, agree that a colleague will be nearby.
- Excursions out of the school, especially residential stays, can provide opportunities for abuse. Care should be taken to ensure that there are sufficient adults to provide proper supervision and that appropriate risk assessment(s) have been carried out.

Physical Contact and Restraint

- Physical contact should only be for the purpose of care, instruction, health and safety, physical intervention or restraint.
- Avoid any physical horseplay with a child, or any other actions another adult or child might misinterpret, no matter how innocent or well-intentioned the actions might be.
- Staff should always be able to justify resorting to physical contact in any situation.
- The nature of the contact should be limited to what is appropriate and proportionate.
- Where possible, initial responses should be to de-escalate and divert before considering physical intervention or restraint. Staff should avoid restraining a child by putting their hands on a child's joints. Where possible another member



of staff should be summoned to witness and give support. As soon as the child is under control, staff should cease any physical contact. All incidents of physical intervention or restraint should be logged, dated and signed in a log kept for that purpose.

- The use of physical restraint on a child should involve the absolute minimum force reasonable to the situation and is only permissible when certain that a child is at imminent risk of endangering themselves or others (or in extreme circumstances of inflicting damage to property).

‘Hands on’ Educational Instruction

- ‘Hands on’ educational instruction / support should only be used when verbal or role-modelling is insufficient, or it is necessary for health and safety reasons. Whenever possible, this should be done within earshot, and preferably within view of others.
- Where 'hands on' is necessary you should seek the young person's permission appropriate to their age and level of understanding and explain to them what you are about to do.

Verbal Remarks

- Positive relationships between staff and children often involve warmth and humour but staff should be aware that there can be a narrow line between remarks which an adult perceives as fair and humorous, but which may be perceived as hurtful and embarrassing to a child.
- Salacious or demeaning remarks should never be made to or in the presence of children and young people. Remarks about a child’s physical characteristics or development, or suggestive or derogatory comments could fall into this category.
- Staff should avoid making unfavourable comparisons to a child and ‘picking on’ particular children.

Communication via E-Technology and social media

- Only ever use messaging services that can be monitored by Regius School.
- Never use private social networking accounts/private mobile phones to make contact with children and young people.
- A teacher can be vulnerable to unintended misuse of electronic communication. E-mail, texting and social media encourage casual dialogue and very often, innocent actions can easily be misconstrued or manipulated. A teacher should



never share information with pupils in any environment that they would not willingly or appropriately share in a school or school-related setting.

- If a teacher is ever emailing a pupil, using the Regius School email accounts, they should always CC the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher is ever emailing a pupil, using the Regius School email accounts, they should always CC the Administrative Lead.

Attachments

- In circumstances where you or a member of staff's relationship with, or feelings towards, a child or young person are at risk of being construed as unprofessional behaviour, seek advice and support from your line manager.
- If it seems that a young person is becoming inappropriately attached to you or to another member of staff or volunteer or adult helper, share your concerns and seek advice from your line manager.

Climate and 'Whistle Blowing'

- In working with children and young people, it is possible for staff, through ill-considered actions, to lay themselves open to allegations of abuse. Their best protection is to encourage a climate of openness within the classroom and school community, where pupils feel confident to point out aspects of behaviour they do not like.
- If another member of staff is seen to behave inappropriately with a child, do not ignore it but share it with the Head Teacher.
- If the concern is about the Head Teacher, then it should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

Inappropriate or Abusive Behaviour

- The list below is presented to show some of the ways in which inappropriate behaviour or abuse may be manifested.
- It is important to recognise that this list is neither definitive nor exhaustive, nor is it meant to suggest that all the actions below are in themselves abusive: they must be seen in the context of the interaction with the child and the intention of staff.
- Staff should bear these in mind as a way of minimising risk and encouraging good practice.
- Staff must always exercise professional judgement in each circumstance.



Physical	Hitting/tapping Pushing/jabbing Throwing missiles Shaking
Emotional	Inappropriate/systematic sarcasm Isolating e.g., locked room Unfavourable comparisons Threats Intimidation Scapegoating Systematic personal criticism
Sexual	Any sexual activity with a pupil Inappropriate touching/comforting Suggestive remarks or gestures Sexual harassment Indecent materials Grooming a child for abuse



Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct Confirmation

Please sign and return to the Headteacher.

I confirm that I have read and understand the Regius School Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

I further confirm I understand how this relates to me; and my duties and responsibilities arising from these documents.

Signed:	
Name (printed):	
Role:	
Date:	