



MAIDEN ERLEGH

SCHOOL

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Dear Parent/Guardian

Sexual Abuse in Education

You may be aware that OfSTED has recently published plans for a review into Safeguarding policies and practices on sexual abuse in both state and independent schools and colleges in England. This has been announced following a large number of reports being made via an online platform (Everyone's Invited) where people were able to share experiences of such abuse anonymously. We just wanted to write to reassure you that our policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and do already feature references to allegations of abuse made against other children and also sexual abuse. We also regularly review cases as a Safeguarding team and ensure staff and students are aware of the signs of peer-on-peer sexual abuse and how to access help. A reminder that our Child Protection policy can be found on our website for your further information.

Additionally, in response to this matter, Sir Peter Wanless (NSPCC CEO) has said 'the testimonies being shared through Everyone's Invited are extremely upsetting and underline the urgent need to tackle abuse in education. This is a watershed moment thanks to those who have found the courage to speak out which is why we have been commissioned by the DfE to set up a helpline for children, parents and professionals to seek expert, sensitive advice and safely report abuse. At least a third of sexual offences against children are committed by other young people and that must be addressed. All children should be able to grow up in a safe community that is free from sexual violence and where their rights are respected. Creating a culture that fosters healthy relationships and challenges harassment and abuse is integral to this. With the right support for teachers, compulsory relationships and sex education has a pivotal role to play in achieving this. But this issue goes beyond schools and we all have a role to play in keeping children safe'. A link for how to access the support offered by the NSPCC can be found here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2021/sexual-abuse-victims-schools-helpline/>

Of course, should you or your child feel they may wish to speak with one of the Safeguarding team about anything related to this or otherwise, we are always ready to listen and respond so please do not hesitate to reach out. During our inspection in February 2020, OfSTED reviewed our Safeguarding provision and we will watch closely the recommendations that come from the DfE relating to this matter. We continue to work on the basis that improvements can always be made and would be more than happy to receive feedback from our parent body on this matter should you wish to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Bhadye
Assistant Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead