

02<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

### **Sexual abuse in education settings**

Dear students, parents and carers,

We are of course very aware of developments in the national media. This week the Government announced a major review into sexual abuse in education settings alongside a dedicated helpline to provide support and guidance to adults and children who have been victims of abuse. The main elements of the announcement are:

- **NSPCC helpline:** The new dedicated, confidential helpline will be run by the NSPCC and is available to current or past victims as well as parents, carers or professionals with concerns. The dedicated NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663, which is live from Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- **Ofsted review:** The Government has also asked Ofsted to undertake an immediate review of safeguarding policies in state and independent schools. The review will look at the extent and the severity of the issue and ensure schools have appropriate processes in place to allow pupils to report concerns freely, knowing these will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately. It will make sure there is sufficient guidance on how schools should deal with sexual harassment and violence allegations. The review will conclude by end of May 2021. We will of course review our policies and procedures to ensure they fully comply with their recommendations.

All professionals recognise the complexity of the issues involved and that these reach beyond schools and into aspects of wider society.

Our schools already follow the statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum introduced last year. This new guidance advocates the explicit teaching and development of important attributes such as respect, honesty, kindness, tolerance and courtesy. Important issues such as personal privacy, respect and consent to ensure that more young people have a good understanding of how to behave towards their peers, are part of the guidance.

The curriculum on relationships and on sex complements, and is supported by, our schools wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, bullying and safeguarding. The curriculum and wider policies are part of a broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and our pastoral care systems.

Schools clearly have a crucial role to play in teaching young people about sexual consent and respect for women and girls but schools cannot do this job alone. Parents and families also have a role and there are clearly issues for us to address in wider society.



We understand that our student, parent and carer community may feel worried. We do have robust systems and processes already in place to keep children and young people safe, and to enable them to report any incident or anything thing that is worrying them. If you are in any doubt about our processes for reporting incidents and our approach to handling them, please visit the safeguarding/student care section of our website. This section will continue to be updated as further guidance emerges and also contain details of named specialist safeguarding staff you can talk to.

If you are unhappy with the way a school has handled a reported incident, I would urge you to follow the Trust's formal complaints procedure. The policy is on the Trust and every school's website.

I know this is an extremely worrying time for students, parents and carers. Please be assured we will listen to all our students, review and act upon our policies and procedures and ensure we offer high quality relationships and sex education to all. Our pastoral and safeguarding teams are always on hand should any students need immediate support and any member of staff at KSA is duty bound to act upon any issues raised by students.

Please rest assured that the safety and wellbeing of our students is absolutely my prime directive and we will continue to care for our school community to the highest possible standards.

Yours faithfully



Tony Segalini  
Principal

