

St Vincent's School for Blind and Partially Sighted Children

Policy Document Title:	Keeping of Records and the Reporting of Incidents
To be read in conjunction with:	Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy Complaints Policy Health, Safety and Security Policy Code of Conduct, Discipline, Rewards and Sanctions Policy Staff handbook
Updated:	07/09 SR/BB
To be reviewed:	07/10

St. Vincent's School Mission Statement:

Inspired by the example of St. Vincent, we work together in a safe and caring atmosphere, where a high standard of education and care are provided.

We encourage a sense of achievement, self-worth, moral responsibility and mutual respect, honouring all faith traditions and beliefs. Each one of us in our community is special and unique. Gifts and talents are valued and nurtured through all our work.

We are outward looking in our approach to the wider educational and social community and we encourage all our young people to become independent and to integrate fully into society.

Record Keeping – Essential Standards

With particular relevance to the recording of child protection and other significant incidents the following standards are essential:

- ❖ Entries should be written legibly and indelibly.
- ❖ Written at the time of the incident or disclosure or as soon as possible afterwards.
- ❖ Written in a clear and unambiguous manner.
- ❖ If you are giving an opinion clearly state that this is the case, if you are quoting the child, make it obvious that you have done so.
- ❖ If any alterations are made they are done so by scoring out with a single line followed by the initialled, dated and timed correct entry.
- ❖ Not include abbreviations, meaningless phrases and offensive or subjective statements.

- ❖ Give a clear date, time, name and role within the school to each entry.
- ❖ Do not use initials when signing the entry – use full names.

When working with the parent/carers of child or young people staff should consider the following principles:

- ❖ Open
- ❖ Honest
- ❖ Clear
- ❖ Two-Way
- ❖ Timely
- ❖ Responsive
- ❖ Consistent
- ❖ Credible
- ❖ Relevant

Guidance notes relating to the Incident Reporting System

The school has a central record system for sanctions, incident, accident and physical intervention with respect to positive handling, which is kept in the main school office.

Within St. Vincent's School an 'incident' is noted in the incident book which is kept in school office with the following information to allow cross-referencing:

- ❖ An Accident – with a notation that further details can be found in the accident file that is kept in the School Office.
- ❖ A Complaint – with a notation that this has been referred to the Principal.
- ❖ A Sanction – with a notation that further details can be found in the Sanctions book that is kept in the school office.
- ❖ A Child Protection concern - with a notation that further details can be found in the Child Protection files within the Principal's Office.

What constitutes an incident?

An incident form needs to be completed in the following circumstances;

- ❖ An accident or risk of an accident involving either a pupil or member of staff
- ❖ Complaint made by pupil, parent/carer or staff
- ❖ A child protection concern
- ❖ Report of incident such as; bullying, fighting, offensive language, racism or an incident concerning the professional conduct of a member of staff.

What should be noted on an incident form?

In all cases the following should be noted;

- ❖ The context in which the incident took place i.e. time and place.
- ❖ Those present pupils and staff.
- ❖ Distinguish between observed fact and opinion as well as between observed fact and what other people said happened. As an incident form could be used as evidence in a child protection case please note especially the following:
 1. Make your record as soon as possible after the event. (if you have to record in the presence of a child, explain what you are doing and why)
 2. Make the record as clear as possible including all relevant information. Other people may need to read it e.g. social workers, LA's, OfSTED.
 3. Accuracy is **VERY IMPORTANT**
 4. Try to make notes as full as possible and include all relevant information. **AVOID JARGON!**
 5. If you are unsure if something is relevant, include it anyway
 6. If you haven't the time to make full notes immediately, make brief ones and write them up later. You must keep the first set of notes and include reasons for any gaps between sets
 7. If you can remember the **EXACT** words used by the child then include them. If you can't, then don't
 8. If more than one person is present at a disclosure, all should make notes and include the fact that they were written with others

9. If writing facts – **BE CLEAR**, if giving an opinion – **BE ABLE TO BACK IT UP**.
10. Sign, date and time your notes and put your work title on.

Where will incident forms be kept?

In a central record held in the school office.

What is the central Incident book for?

In order to reassure both outside agencies, and ourselves, it is important that an overall tracking and monitoring system is in place. From the book, it should be possible to analyse trends etc. Information from the incident book is used to inform the Governing Body of the type and frequency of incidents occurring within the school.

What is the form number for?

On each incident form there is a space on which to place a form number. This allows senior staff a means to track and cross reference an incident to other documentation overall as allowing outside inspection/evaluation of our work

Who can fill out an incident form?

Any member of staff.

Who should I hand a form to?

The school office holds all incident forms. On completion the Principal, Duty Head or Pastoral and Independence Skills Manager should be made aware an incident has occurred.

Who follows up incidents?

There may be no need to follow up incidents if the member of staff has already dealt with the incident i.e. imposed a sanction. Some incidents i.e. complaints and child protection will be dealt with by senior staff following the individual policy documentation. One or

more of the schools designated child protection co-ordinators will follow up a child protection incident. The Principal reads and signs all incident forms.

Investigations following incidents will be co-ordinated by one of the SMT members but may involve delegation of tasks to other staff.

Monitoring of incidents by Keyworkers/Form Teachers/LSA's

1. Keyworkers, Form Teachers, LSA's should be mindful of this documentation and the incident book in order to maintain a strategic overview of incidents covering key pupils.
2. Keyworkers, Form Teachers, LSA's can raise patterns of behaviour arising out of incident forms during supervision.

What should be recorded on a daily basis by staff on the issue of incidents?

If an incident has occurred (other than child protection, staff disciplinary and some complaints) it should be recorded in the log book located in the 'signing in' room.

What should I do if I witness a *Really Serious* incident involving a senior member of staff?

There are some incidents, hopefully very rare, that are so serious that it would be wrong for the school to keep them "in house" without involving outside agencies. If a member of staff genuinely feels that an incident would not be managed appropriately they can whistle blow to either the St. Vincent's School Board of Governors or OfSTED. Staff can also make a referral to any child protection duty officer giving details of their concerns. Similarly staff need to be aware that managers have a duty to inform the agencies above of serious allegations facing individual staff members.