



# Child protection and safeguarding policy

## Purpose:

RCSC, has an ethical and moral duty to ensure that the school functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who are working at, or are visiting the school. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

RCSC plays a vital role in the local community as protector of children. RCSC aims to ensure that all children in the school's care are afforded a safe and secure environment to grow and develop.

## Aims and Objectives:

The primary aims and objectives of this policy are as follows:

- the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance
- the education of all members of the RCSC community is critical
- adopt procedures to protect staff from conduct which may leave them open to accusations
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in ensuring the protection of their children
- fully respect confidentiality requirements, subject to reporting requirements
- fully cooperate with the relevant authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- ensure that policies, procedures and handbooks are kept up to date and accessible to the community.

## Scope:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interest** of the child.

## 1. Ethos statement

We recognise the moral and statutory responsibility placed on all staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment in which children can learn, underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, are able to raise concerns and believe they are being listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken to keep them safe.

## 2. Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.



This policy is for all staff, parents, volunteers, and contractors and the wider school community. It forms part of the child protection and safeguarding arrangements for our school. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy (including Acceptable Use of ICT),

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide staff with a framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people, and ensure that all staff understand and meet their statutory responsibilities;
- Ensure consistent good practice across the school.

The governing body expects that all staff will know and understand this child protection and safeguarding policy and their responsibility to implement it.

Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the, designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

#### **4. Key roles and responsibilities**

##### **Head of School**

The Head of School has a strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation.

The Head of School will ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school and ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, and that all systems, processes and policies are transparent, clear and easy to understand and operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

The Head of School will ensure that where there is a safeguarding concern school leaders will make sure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems will be in place that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report any form of abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The Head of School will ensure that, as a minimum, the following policies are in place to enable appropriate action to be taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people as appropriate:

- \* child-on-child abuse
- \* online safety,
- \* behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudiced based and discriminatory bullying)
- \* special education needs and disability
- \* supporting students in school with medical conditions



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\* staff code of conduct/behaviour policy (which should also include the procedures that will be followed to address low-level concerns and allegations made against staff, and acceptable use of IT, including the use of mobile devices and communications, including the use of social media)

\* safer recruitment

It is the responsibility of the HR to ensure that staff and volunteers are properly vetted to make sure they are safe to work with the students who attend our school and that the school has procedures for appropriately managing safeguard made against members of staff (including the head teacher, supply teachers, contractors, and volunteer helpers).

The Head of School will ensure that there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding DDSL, who is a senior member of the leadership team.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety).

During term time, the DSL and/or DDSL should always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL will make arrangements for adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term time activities.

## **All staff**

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff must ensure they are familiar with the systems within school which support safeguarding, including the child protection and safeguarding policy, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, the behaviour policy, and the role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies). These will be explained at all staff on induction.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff should maintain belief that “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned and if staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare they must act on them immediately

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, neglected or exploited, and/or is otherwise at risk of involvement in criminal activity.

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding issues. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy).



## 5. Training

The Head of School will ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety). In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and up to date knowledge of emerging and evolving safeguarding issues to safeguard children effectively.

All new staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training on the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, online safety, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, the behaviour policy and the role of the designated safeguarding lead.

The DSL will ensure that an accurate record of safeguarding training undertaken by all staff is maintained and updated regularly.

In considering safeguarding training arrangements the DSL will also have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment, and require teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all students.

## 6. Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Staff should be aware that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school, inside and outside of homes and online.

Staff should exercise professional curiosity and know what to look for as this is vital for the early identification of abuse or neglect.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and recognise that children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently both online and offline.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL.

### Indicators of abuse and neglect

**Abuse** is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly



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online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

The following indicators listed under the categories of abuse are not an exhaustive list:

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

## 7. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm.

### Child-on-child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in school it does not mean it's not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature.



Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.

All staff should be clear about the school’s policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. Any staff concerns about possible or disclosed child on child abuse must be reported to the DSL immediately and recorded using the school’s procedure (My Concern / paper recording form).

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or pattern of incidents. That’s abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

### **Mental Health**

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Staff can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the school’s policy, and speaking to the DSL or a deputy.





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## **Serious violence**

All staff should be aware of the indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

**Children with SEN and disabilities, or health issues** can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline.

Staff should avoid making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury may relate to the child's disability or medical condition without further exploration.

Staff should also be aware that these children may be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. Similarly, staff should be aware of the potential for children with SEN or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying without outwardly showing signs or being able to communicate how they are feeling.

Staff also need to be mindful of children's cognitive understanding, for example, whether they are able to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and the consequences of repeating the content/behaviours in school.

## **9. Opportunities to teach safeguarding.**

The governing body will ensure that children and young people are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online presence and identity.

The governing body recognise that effective education should be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with SEN.

## **10. Online safety**

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation and technology often provides the platform that facilitates such harm.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The school adopts a whole school approach to online safety to protect and educate students and staff in their use of technology, and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns as appropriate.



Online safety issues can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, or radicalisation or extremism;
- Contact: being exposed to harmful online interaction with other users, for example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising, and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;
- Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images, and online bullying); and
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

## 11. Procedures

If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect / child on child abuse or signs that a child or young person may be experiencing any safeguarding issue they should record their concerns on a school recording form for safeguarding concerns and pass it to the DSL without delay. RCS uses a paper based management system to record concerns. They record their concerns using the paper recording form in appendix b, and pass this to the DSL or DDSL immediately.

### **What to do if you are concerned.**

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully;
- Accept what is being said;
- Allow the child/young person to talk freely – do not interrupt or put words in the child/young person's mouth;
- Only ask questions when necessary to clarify, do not investigate or ask leading questions;
- Reassure the child, but don't make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Emphasise that it was the right thing to tell someone;
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault;
- Do not criticise the perpetrator;
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told;
- Make a written record, which should be signed and include the time, date and your position in school;
- Do not include your opinion without stating it is your opinion;
- Pass the information to the DSL or alternate without delay





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- Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL as dealing with a disclosure can be distressing.

When a record of a safeguarding concern is passed to the DSL, the DSL will record the time and date the record of concern was received. The DSL will assess the concern and, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child/young person, consider whether it suggests that the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached.

Where reasonably possible, the school is committed to obtaining more than one emergency contact number for each student.

## **12. Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

The school recognises that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or DDSL with other relevant members of staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents/carers or students), or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

## **13. Managing allegations made against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors**

An allegation that may meet the harm threshold is any information which indicates that a member of staff /volunteer may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This applies to any child the member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor has contact with in their personal, professional or community life.

If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the Head of School.



Where the concerns or allegations are about the Head of School, these should be referred to the Board.

#### **14. Whistleblowing**

The governing body recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failure in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example, students in the school or members of the public.

The Head of School and the Board would wish for everyone in the school community to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns through existing procedures within school, including the whistleblowing procedure



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## Appendix A

### Paper recording form

#### Record of concern about a child/young person’s safety and welfare

Part 1 (for use by any staff – must be handwritten and legible/ or equivalent information on electronic recording system)

Student’s name:	Date of birth:	Class/Form:
Date & time of incident:	Date & time (of writing):	
Name ..... (print):                      Job title:		
Signature: .....		
Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i>		
What is the student’s perspective?		
Professional opinion, where relevant <i>(how and why might this have happened?)</i>		
Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc. <i>(distinguish between fact and opinion)</i>		



Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when	
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Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

**Please pass this form to your DSL without delay**



# Child protection and safeguarding policy

## Record of concern about a child/young person's safety and welfare

Part 2 (for use by DSL)

Information received by DSL:	Date:	Time completed:	From whom:		
Any advice sought, if applicable	Date:	Time completed:	From: name/organisation:		
	Advice received:				
Action taken with reasons recorded (e.g. MARF completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff, CAF etc)	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
Outcome	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
Parent/carer informed?	<b>Y</b>	Who spoken to:	Date:	Time:	By whom:
	<b>N</b>	Detail reason:			
Is any additional detail held, if so where?					
Prior safeguarding history	No. of previous records of concern:				
	Has the child been subject of CAF/Early Help assessment?				
	Currently on CP Plan (CPP) / Child in Need Plan (CiN)				
	Previously on CP Plan (CPP) / Child in Need Plan (CiN)				
	Is child known to other agencies?		Y / N		
Name of DSL:			Signature:		



## Appendix B

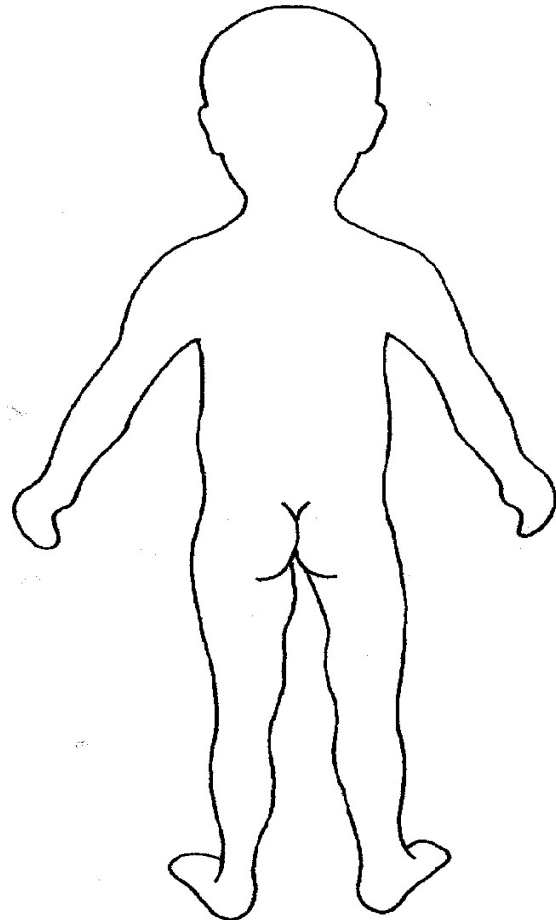
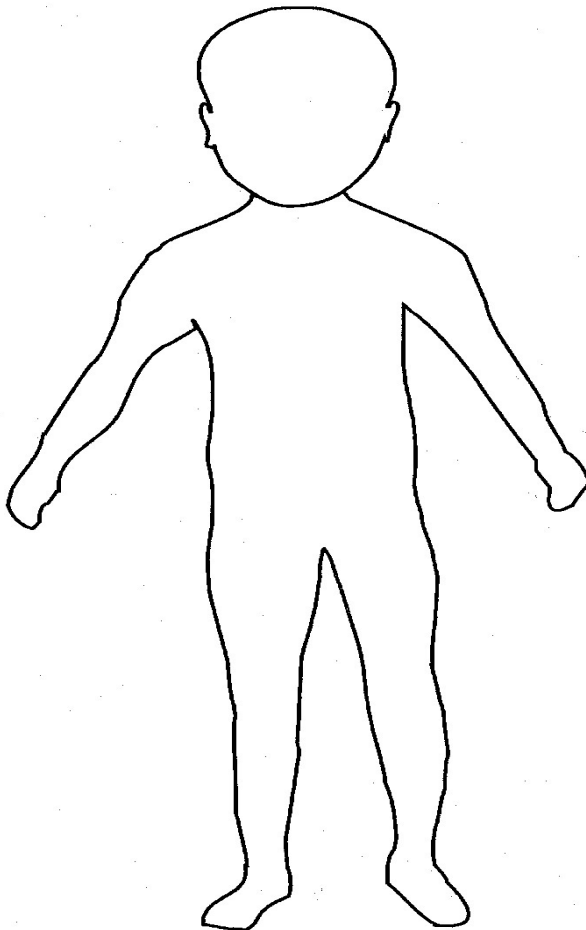
### BODYMAP

**(This must be completed at time of observation)**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

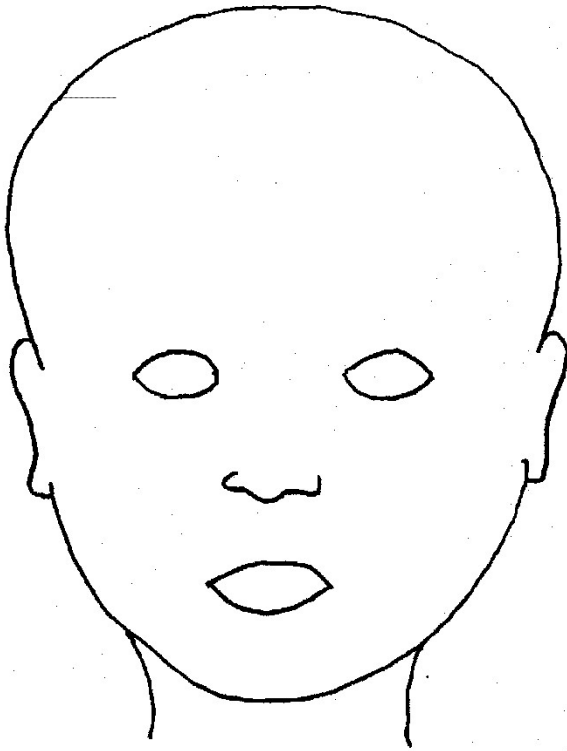
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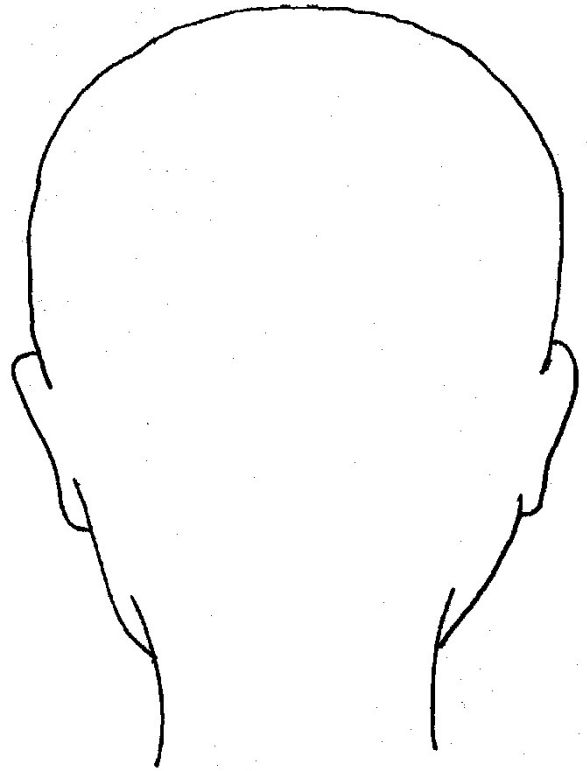
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Date and time of  
observation:

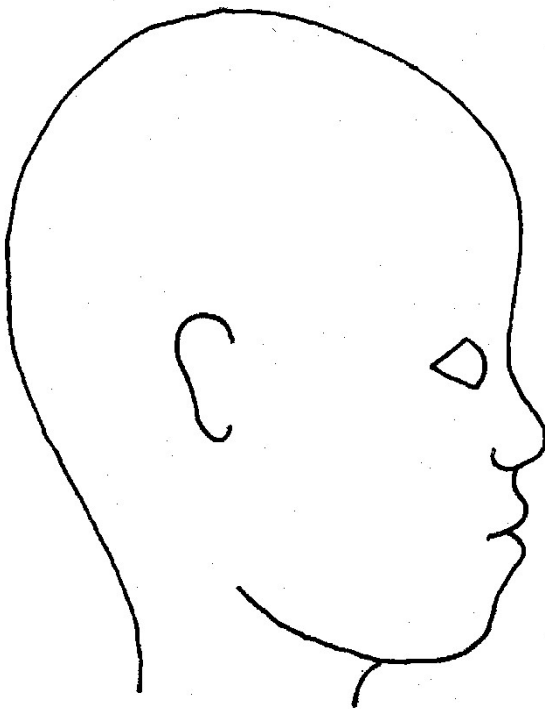




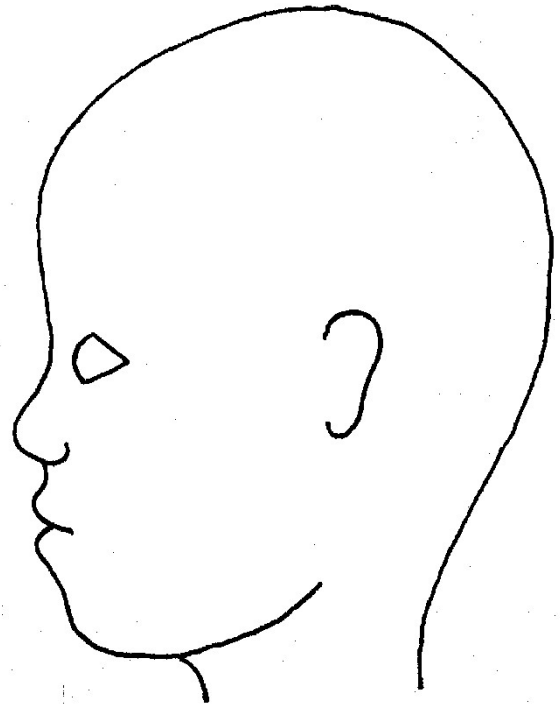
**FRONT**



**BACK**



**RIGHT**



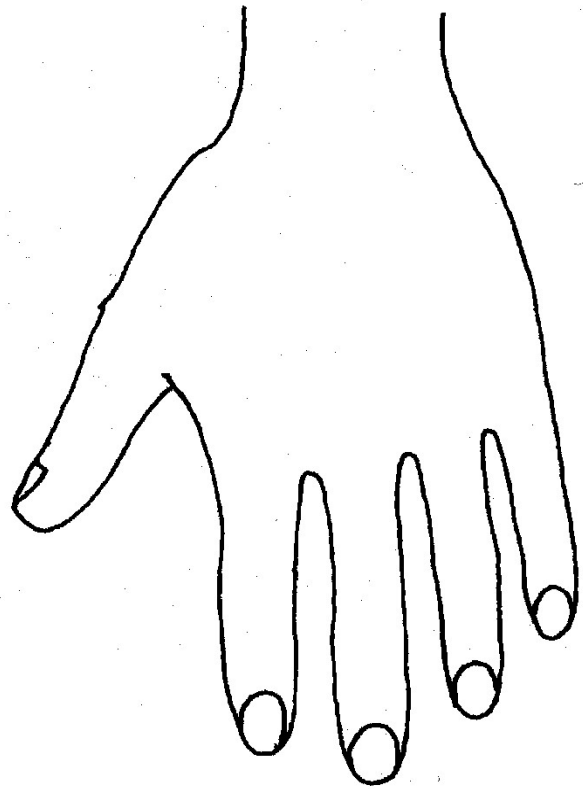
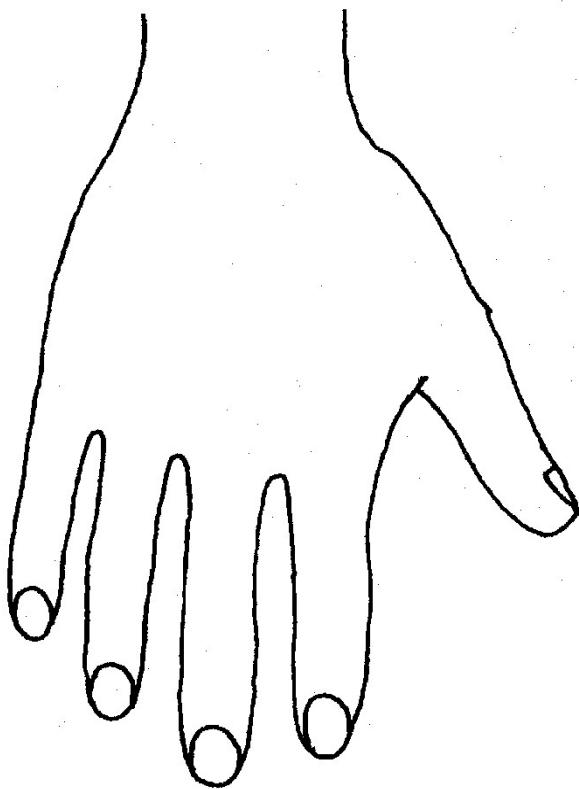
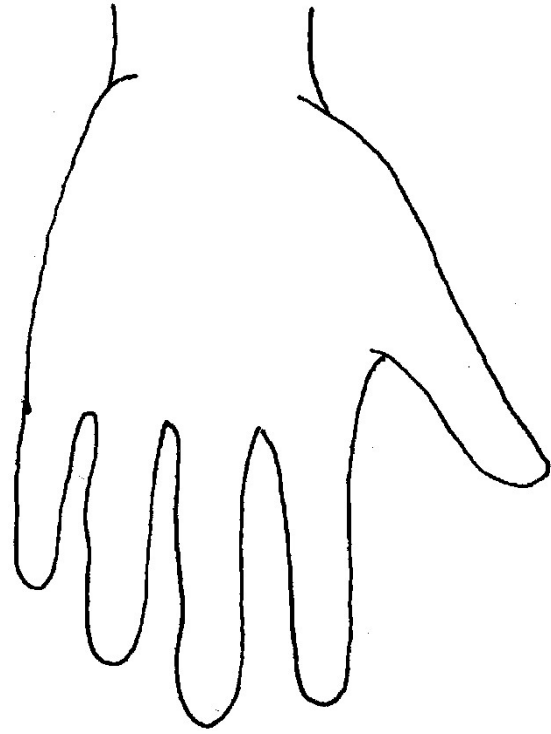
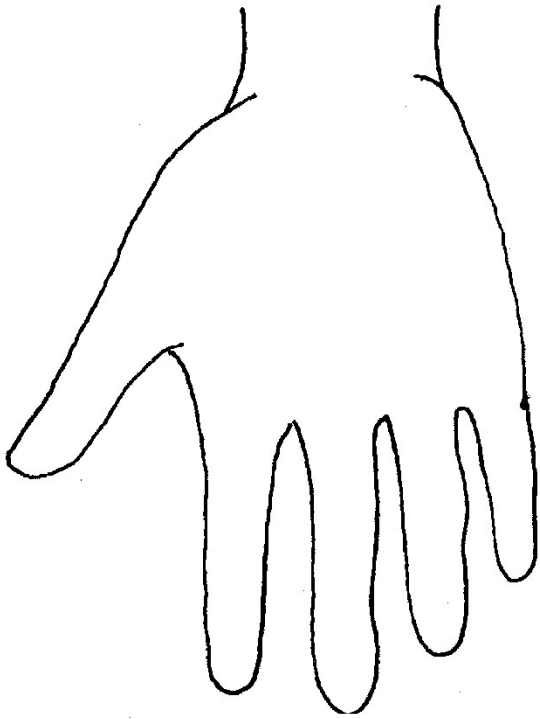
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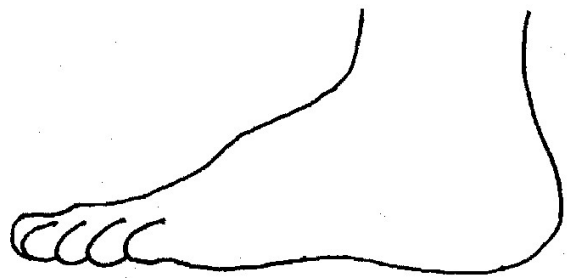
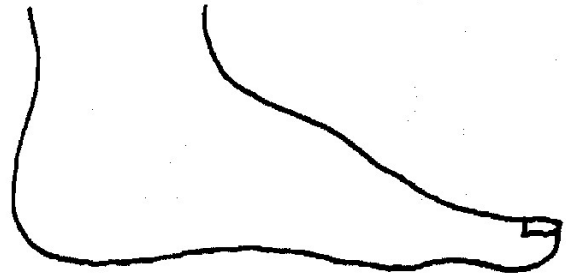
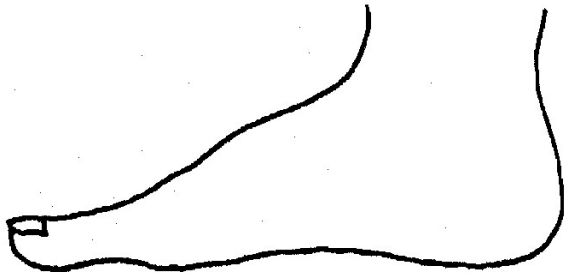


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Name of student:

Date and time of





**INNER**

**R**

**L**

**OUTER**

**R**

**L**

Printed Name,  
Signature and Job  
title of staff: