

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Date Reviewed	November 2019
Approved by Governing Body	
Policy Review Date	November 2021



POLICY STATEMENT

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our Education Centre and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

DEFINITIONS

Within this document:

The umbrella term ‘**Safeguarding**’ is defined in the Children Act 2004 as protecting from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health and development; ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care; and work in a way that gives the best life chances and transition to adult hood. Our safeguarding practice applies to every child.

Child Protection is an aspect of safeguarding, but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term **Staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the Education Centre, full time or part time, in either a paid or a voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and Governors.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18 birthday. Overall, this will apply to pupils of our Education Centre; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster carers.

Abuse could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and / or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

AIMS

- To provide Staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the Education Centre.
- To demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexuality, religion, culture or language have a right to be protected from harm.
- All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm in accordance with the guidance.
- We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.
- Whilst the Centre will work openly with parents as far as possible, the Centre reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

We recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can undermine good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process.

In the Bridge Education Centre, any individual can contact a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a young person.

Lead DSL is **Chris Bayliss**, Headteacher, and there is a nominated **Safeguarding Governor**, **Beverley Francis**, who will receive reports of allegations against the Head Teacher and act on the behalf of the Management Committee.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All contracted, temporary, supply staff, Management Committee and volunteers have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems.
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Attend training in order to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' with regards to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the relevant person as soon as practical that day.
- If the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff, they will follow the allegations' procedures.
- Follow the procedures set out by the HSCB and take account of guidance issued by the DfE.
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to 'keep a secret'.
- Notify DSL of any child on a child protection plan who has unexplained absence.
- In the context of early help, staff will notify colleagues and/or parents of any concerns about their child or children, and provide them with, or signpost them to, opportunities to change the situation.
- Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with guidance (Working Together 2015).
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Work with Children's Services; support their assessment and planning processes including the schools attendance at conference and core group meetings.
- Carry out tasks delegated by the management committee such as training of staff; safer recruitment; maintaining a Single Centre Register.
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school.
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow procedures.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DfE), Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) and Hampshire County Council (HCC).

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Annual report to HSCB.
- The school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place:
- That the school has a broad and balanced curriculum that incorporates safeguarding
- That national and local guidance is followed including Working together, Keeping children safe (particularly the safer recruitment section) and HSCB procedures
- There is a member of the schools leadership identified as DSL
- That training is undertaken at the required frequency
- There is a nominated governor for dealing with allegations against the head teacher and a governor with safeguarding lead
- An annual audit of safeguarding is carried out and any concerns are remedied without delay

DSL RESPONSIBILITIES

In this school the DSL is Chris Bayliss (Headteacher). The deputy DSL is Serena McKinlay (Assistant Headteacher).

In addition to the role of staff and senior management team the DSL will:

- Assist the management committee in fulfilling their responsibilities under section 175 or 157 of the education act 2002.
- Attend initial training for the role and refresh this every year.
- Demonstrate evidence of continuing professional development thereafter.
- Ensure every member of staff knows who the DSL, Deputy DSL and other DSL trained staff are, is aware of the DSL role and has their contact details.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL.
- Ensure that whole school training occurs annually so that staff and volunteers can fulfil their responsibilities. Staff training takes place on the first day of the autumn term each year.
- Ensure any members of staff joining the school outside of this training schedule receive safeguarding induction prior to commencement of their duties.
- Keep written records of child protection concerns securely and separately from the main pupil file and use these records to assess the likelihood of risk.
- Ensure that copies of safeguarding records are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child transfers school.
- Ensure that where a pupil transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, the information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
- Link with the HSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable the identification and reporting of all cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

TRAINING

All frontline staff in Education should be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and be able to respond appropriately. Training is provided to the whole school every year with separate training to all new staff on appointment. All DSLs have attended initial training for the role and regular refresher training.

Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings and then captured in the next whole school training.

All staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating.

- ***Listening and responding***

- All staff receive DSL training (delivered by the Lead DSL) in how to listen and respond to children. They will allow the child to speak and only ask open questions to aid clarification.
- Any member of staff who has concerns about the welfare of a child must share this information with the DSL.

- ***Record keeping***

- Staff make a brief accurate verbatim record of the concerns including the child's own words (if a disclosure) or the evidence that has led to the concerns.
- This report is given to the DSL who will store the record securely and away from the main pupil records.
- Referrals where urgent action is required should never be delayed in order for a full record to be written.

- ***Confidentiality***

- We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'working together' guidance.
- Information will only be shared with agencies who we have a statutory duty to share with or individuals within the Centre who 'need to know'.
- All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child that they will keep a secret
- Disciplinary action will be considered for any breach of confidentiality.

- ***Reporting***

- Staff will notify DSL of any child on a Child Protection Plan who is absent for two or more days unless there are reasons why this should be reported sooner.
- Staff will report to DSL any additional concerns, disclosures or observations after the initial referral, not assuming that a referral in itself will protect children.

REFERRAL

The DSL is Chris Bayliss (Headteacher) and Deputy DSL is Serena McKinlay (Assistant Headteacher). The DSL will assess the information and consider if significant harm has happened or there is a risk that it may happen. If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm has been reached; or they are not clear if the threshold is met, then the DSL will call children's social care.

Generally the DSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral however there are situations where this may not be possible or appropriate.

The following staff are also Safeguarding trained. If neither DSL staff are available then the following staff can be contacted in their absence.

Peter O'Donnell – Assistant Headteacher

Sue Hills – Parents Support Officer

Elaine Cross – Educational Psychologist

As an Education Centre we will educate and encourage pupils to Keep Safe through:

- The content of the curriculum
- A school ethos which helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.
- The "Rights, Respect and Responsibility" agenda

Dealing with allegations against staff.

If a child, parent or staff member should raise concerns about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff (using the policy definition) this information will be recorded and passed to the Headteacher, **Chris Bayliss**, The Local Authority Designated Officer on 01962 876364 will be contacted and the relevant guidance will be followed.

If the allegation is against the Head teacher, the LADO on 01962 876364 should be contacted directly so that they can liaise with the management committee's nominated Governor (Matthew Leeming).

LEGAL CONTEXT

Section 175 (maintained schools) or Section 157 (independent schools and academies) of the *Education Act 2002*.

Children Act 2004 & 1989

Guidance

Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Board protocols and guidance and their procedures (from *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016

Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping children safe in education pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

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