



**PUTNEY PARK
SCHOOL**

**SAFEGUARDING AND
CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY**

2011 / 2012

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Introduction

The health, safety and well-being of all our pupils are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Pupils have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.

In our school we respect our pupils. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all pupils to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our pupils to take and make decisions for themselves.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our pupils and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.

Corporal punishment is prohibited for all pupils during any activity, whether or not within the school premises.

Aims and Objectives

This policy ensures that all staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- to ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
- to lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

Procedures

The Head is the designated person for Safeguarding and Child Protection for the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage, but she may delegate this responsibility in some circumstances.

As the designated person, the head will update her training every two years. [Training updated 29th January 2010].

In addition, the Director of Pastoral Care, Maria Major, has undertaken training as a designated person [training updated 25th February 2010]. This will be updated every two years.

Training in child protection for all staff including part-time staff and volunteers will be updated every three years. [Last training 14th April 2008 and March 2011].

If any teacher suspects that a child in his/her class may be a victim of abuse, they immediately inform the Head about their concerns. Abuse can be of a sexual, emotional or physical nature. It can also be the result of neglect.

For procedures for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil please see Anti-bullying Policy.

Any action that the Headmistress takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LEA Child Protection guidelines including dealing with allegations against a member of staff. Wandsworth Child Protection Unit, tel: 020 8871 7025, [for Early Years 020 8871 8789] will be contacted within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

The Headmistress works closely with the Social Services department and the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) when investigating any allegations of abuse.

All parties involved handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, but the interest of the child is of paramount importance.

If a child alleges abuse, the school may make a referral without communicating with parents first. In some circumstances we do inform parents first.

If a child protection referral is made, a case conference is held as soon as the Local Authority can arrange it. The case conference offers the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action. Staff are expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings held under the LEA guidelines.

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat this accordingly. We only pass information on to appropriate persons. We inform the child at all stages of who is involved, and what information we have given them.

We require all adults employed in our school to have their application vetted through a CRB check in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse. (Please see Employment Policy for more detail).

There may be times when adults in our school, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children to avert an immediate danger or personal injury to, or an immediate danger to the property of, a person (including the child himself). The Headmistress requires the adult involved in any such incident to report this to her immediately, and to record it in writing to be kept on file.

All adults in the school receive training to raise their awareness of abuse and their knowledge of agreed local child protection procedures.

The Head will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether

that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

The Head will inform Ofsted, as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations, A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement commits an offence.

If a child goes missing, the Head or Deputy will inform the parents and the police.

If a child is not collected at the appointed time, the Head or Deputy will inform Wandsworth Social Services, Duty Social Services 020 8871 6622 and the police.

Further information is included in the following documents, copies of which are kept in the Heads office and are available on request:

1. Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMSO 1999)
2. Wandsworth Borough Guidelines (May 2002).
3. Wandsworth Child Protection Awareness Training Session
4. Wandsworth Child Protection Policy

Allegations of Child Abuse against Staff

- The procedures detailed in the Putney Park Complaints Policy will be followed.
- In the event of an allegation against the Head, the Principal will assume the Child Protection Co-ordinator role.
- In the event of allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers, the Head will investigate and report to the Principal.
- Employers have a dual responsibility – to safeguard the children in their care and to ensure staff are treated fairly.
- If a staff member is faced with an allegation against them, they may benefit from the independent advice of a solicitor or their union.
- If an allegation is made, this staff member should not have any contact with the children or their records until the matter has been dealt with.
- Suspension is a neutral act and it should not be automatic. It should be considered in any case where
 - there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm
 - the allegation warrants investigation by the police

- the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal
- The Head will contact Wandsworth Child Protection Unit on 020 8871 7025 [for Early Years 020 8871 8789] within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse
- Once the referral is made to Children's Specialist Services, they will convene an urgent strategy meeting. This meeting will consider the available information, decide whether an investigation is indicated, work out the details, who will be involved and arrangements for interviewing
 - the child
 - any witnesses
 - the person who made the allegation
 - parent/guardian/carer
 - the accused staff member
- The final decision regarding the person's continued employment will be informed by the outcome of the child protection investigation and/or criminal investigation
- It is not advisable to accept a person's resignation as an alternative to dismissal.
- Even if the police decide there is not enough evidence to bring criminal charges, the employer must decide whether to proceed with a disciplinary hearing on the basis of prima facie evidence under their disciplinary code.

Extended School and Off-site Arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Procedure if Person considered unsuitable to work with Children

Any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children, must be reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) at PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (tel: 0300 123 1111), within one month of leaving the school. The report must include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible.

Monitoring and Review

The Headmistress, Principal, Deputy Head and Director of Pastoral Care review this policy annually, together with the records of suspected or actual abuse and of physical intervention by staff.

If any deficiencies or weaknesses in the arrangements become apparent, they will be remedied immediately and not be left to the next annual review.

Reviewed: May 2011 by Ruth Mann
Next review date: May 2012

Appendix A

CATEGORIES FOR CHILD PROTECTION REGISTRATION (with definitions)

NEGLECT

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out: important aspects of care resulting in the severe impairment of the child's health or development including non-organic failure to thrive.

PHYSICAL INJURY

Actual or likely physical injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Appendix B

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

PHYSICAL

- unexplained injuries or burns (particularly if recurrent)
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- refusal to discuss injuries; untreated injuries
- admission of punishment which appears excessive
- bald patches
- withdrawal from physical contact
- arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- fear of returning home
- fear of medical help
- self-destructive tendencies
- aggression towards others
- running away
- bites

EMOTIONAL

- developmental delay
- over-reaction to mistakes
- continual self-deprecation
- sudden speech disorders
- fear of new situations
- inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- self-mutilation
- fear of parents being contacted
- extremes of passivity or aggression
- drug / solvent abuse
- running away
- eating disorders
- poor relationships
- frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- untreated medical problems

NEGLECT

- constant hunger
- poor personal hygiene
- constant tiredness
- poor state of clothing
- emaciation
- destructive tendencies
- low self-esteem
- neurotic behaviour
- poor social relationships
- running away
- compulsive stealing or scavenging

SEXUAL

- sudden changes in behaviour
- sudden changes in school performance
- displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age
- clinginess or excessive need for reassurance
- regressive behaviour
- complaints of genital itching or pain
- distrust of a familiar adult
- anxiety about being left with a particular adult
- unexplained gifts of money
- depression or withdrawal
- wetting, day or night
- sleep disturbances or nightmares
- chronic illness, especially throat infections and bladder or venereal disease
- anorexia or bulimia
- pregnancy
- fear of undressing (e.g. for sport)
- phobias or panic attacks
- inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Appendix C

SOME DOS AND DON'TS TO THINK ABOUT

DO

- Take time to read any local C.P. protocol
- Think about what you might say / do / how you present, before it happens
- Try to be available to be spoken to. The child may not be ready when you are
- Listen carefully to what the child says – without interrupting
- Keep an open mind about what you are told
- Believe the child, even if you cannot see any injury which would support the story
- Refer on as soon as possible, via protocol or direct to Social Services. Seek advice / assistance if necessary
- Consider timescale for preservation of any forensic evidence (mainly sexual abuse)
- Consider timescale for recording physical evidence (e.g. a medical for injuries).

RECORD

- **Fully**
- **Child's own words – not your interpretation**
- **Sign the notes**
- **Date the notes**
- **Get them witnessed**
- **Keep the original notes safe**

DON'T

- Promise confidentiality
 - Pre-judge what you are told
 - Ask leading questions; just establish what the child is telling you, then stop.
 - Delay referral
 - Wait to be sure
 - Make a decision without the whole picture
 - Be concerned about 'starting' an investigation; you will be supported
 - Be afraid of being wrong
-

Guidance For Staff

To avoid any possibility of allegations by pupils:

DON'T

- Engage in inappropriate electronic communication with pupils
- Transport pupil in front seat of your car
- Tutor on on-to-one basis with the door closed unless door has a window in it.
- Male members of staff should not use toilet cubicles designated for use by pupils. Male members of staff in
 - Nos. 22 and 24 : please use the designated male toilet downstairs in Appledore
 - No.11 : please use one of the two staff toilets
 - No.7 : please use the toilet outside the ICT room.