

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**Policy review: October 2019**

**Next Review: October 2020**

**Child Protection Policy**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Christopher Connor

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Samantha Pugh

**Introduction**

Fens Primary School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. The aim of the policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils’ welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The pupils’ welfare is of paramount importance.

This policy is consistent with: the legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002 [or section 157 of the Education Act 2002 for independent schools and academies], the statutory guidance *“Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges” (September 2019)* and local Safeguarding Partners (local authority, a clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area and the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area) – (Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP): Hartlepool Borough Council/Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Cleveland Police, Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group) strategies and arrangements, which contain procedures and guidance for safeguarding children.

There are four main elements to our Child Protection Policy:

**Prevention** (e.g. positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils, safer recruitment procedures);

**Protection** (by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns;

**Support** (to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused);

**Working with parents** (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken).

This policy applies to all staff, governors and visitors to the school. We recognise that child protection is the responsibility of all staff. We will ensure that all parents and other working partners are aware of our child protection procedures by mentioning them in our school prospectus, raising awareness at meetings with parents and publishing the policy on our school website.

**Extended school activities**

Where the Governing Body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school’s arrangements for child protection will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body will seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

**Safeguarding Commitment**

The school adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for

pastoral care. Staff encourage children and parents to feel free to talk about any concerns and to

see school as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children’s worries and fears will be taken

seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.

Our school will therefore:

* Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
* Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty;
* Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHEE/SMSCD which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse (including online), and to know to whom they can turn for help;
* Ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies;
* Operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

**Safeguarding in the Curriculum**

The following areas are among those addressed in SMSCD and in the wider curriculum:

Bullying/Cyberbullying

Peer on Peer Abuse

Drugs

Online Safety/E-Safety/Safer Online

Stranger Danger

Fire and Water Safety

Road Safety

Diversity Issues

Extremism and Radicalisation

Serious Violence/Crime

**Roles and Responsibilities**

General

All adults working with, or on behalf of, children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes a responsibility to be alert to possible abuse and to record and report concerns to staff identified with child protection responsibilities within the school.

The names of the ‘Designated Safeguarding Lead’ and ‘Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead’ for the current academic year are listed at the start of this document and are displayed around the school.

Governing Body

In accordance with the statutory Guidance ‘Keeping children safe in education’ (September 2019)*,* the Governing Body will ensure that: -

* The school has a child protection/safeguarding policy, procedures and training in place which are effective and comply with the law at all times. The policies are made available publicly.
* The school operates safer recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers.
* There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers.
* There is a senior member of the school’s senior leadership team who is designated to take a leading responsibility for dealing with child protection (the “Designated Safeguarding Lead” (DSL)) and that there is always cover for this role, should this lead be off site or absent.
* The Designated Safeguarding Leads undertake Local Authority training and this is refreshed every two years.
* The Headteacher, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate training which is regularly updated, and new staff and volunteers, who work with children, are made aware of the school’s arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. The HM Government document ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused-Advice for practitioners’ (March 2015) is used as part of this induction. Induction training, includes the school’s behaviour policy and the school’s procedures for managing children who are missing from education, as well as the staff code of conduct/handbook, and the child protection policy.
* Any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to the attention of the Governing Body will be rectified without delay.
* The Chair of Governors (or, in the absence of a Chair, the Vice Chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher, in line with DFE and Local Authority advice and guidance.
* Effective policies and procedures are in place and updated annually including a behaviour “code of conduct” and handbook for staff and volunteers.
* There is an individual member of the Governing Body who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy, and provide information and reports to the Governing Body.
* The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance ‘Working together to safeguard children’ (July 2018) including providing a co-ordinated offer of early help for children who require this. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority Safeguarding Partners (Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP)) .

**Headteacher**

The Headteacher of the school will ensure that:

* The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are effectively implemented, and followed by all staff;
* Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Safeguarding Leads and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy meetings and other multi-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
* Actions resulting from allegations of abuse or concerns that a member of staff or adult working at school may pose a risk of harm to a child or young person follow DFE and Local Authority guidelines and procedures;
* All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner;
* All staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility to pass on safeguarding concerns and that if all else fails to report these directly to The Children’s Hub (01429 284284) (08702402994 out of hours) or the Police.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy are found in Annex B of ‘Keeping children safe in education’ September 2019.

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding leads are:

Managing referrals

The designated safeguarding leads are expected to:

* refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as required;
* support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care;
* refer cases to the Channel Programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
* support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
* refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
* refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding leads are expected to:

* act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
* liaise with the Headteacher and inform him of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
* as required, liaise with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the LA for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
* liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENDCOs) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
* act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead and deputies undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training is updated at least every two years. Prevent awareness training is part of this.

In addition to the formal training, their knowledge and skills are refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow then to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

• understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children’s social care referral arrangements.

• have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

• ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;

• are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;

* understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation.
* understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.

• be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;

•understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;

• are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school;

• can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming, radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;

• obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and

• encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Raising Awareness

The designated safeguarding leads will:

•ensure the school’s child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;

• ensure the school’s child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;

• ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and

• link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Child Protection File

Where children leave the school the designated safeguarding leads should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. In circumstances resulting in the school receiving children, key staff such as the designated safeguarding leads and SENDCOs, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding leads should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place from when the child arrives.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would expect to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with the designated safeguarding leads, to define what “available” means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype/Face Time or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

**What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

If staff have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately. If staff have a concern, they should follow school policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Options will then include:

* managing any support for the child internally via the school’s own pastoral support processes;
* an early help assessment;or
* a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children’s social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice) (found with this policy) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information.

**Early help**

If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead professional. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children’s social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child’s situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

**Statutory assessments**

**Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children’s social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.** Referrals should follow the local authority’s referral process.

**Children in need**

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

**Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm**

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquires under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

The online tool [Report child abuse to local council](https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council) directs to the relevant local children’s social care contact number.

**What will the local authority do?**

The local authority should make a decision, within one working day of a referral being made, about the type of response that is required and should let the referrer know the outcome. This will include determining whether:

* the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
* whether the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17;
* there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47;
* any services are required by the child and family and what type of services; and
* further specialist assessments are required in order to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff will do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as required).

If, after a referral, the child’s situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child’s situation improves.

**Female Genital Mutilation mandatory reporting duty for teachers**

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers.If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

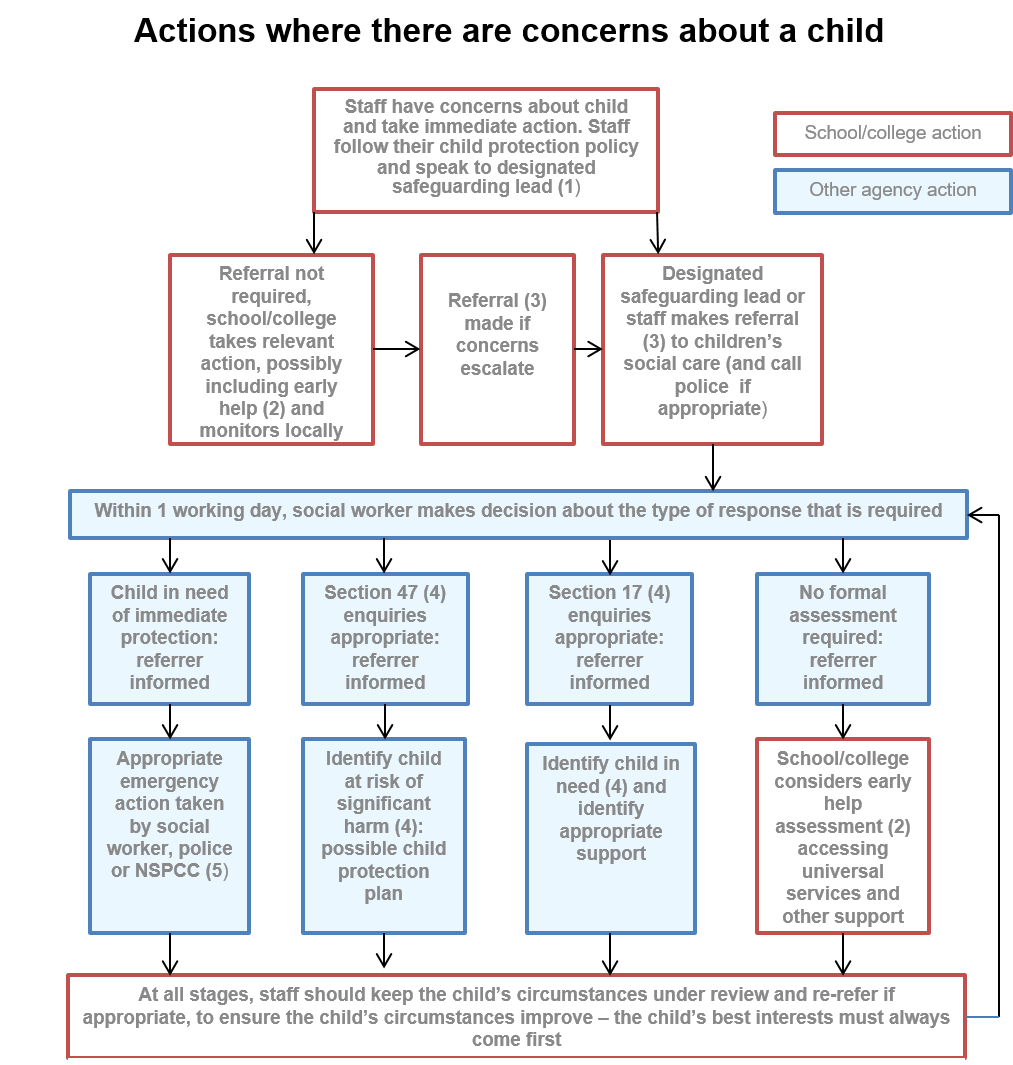
**Record keeping**

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 designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

**Why is all of this important?**

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Examples of this poor practice include:

* failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
* poor record keeping;
* failing to listen to the views of the child;
* failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
* not sharing information;
* sharing information too slowly; and
* a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.



**Indicators of abuse and neglect**

All school staff need to 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.

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

**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 from 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 a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

**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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Records, Monitoring and Transfer**

Accurate records are essential to good child protection practice. All staff are clear about the need to

record and report concerns about a child or children within the school. The Designated Safeguarding

Lead and Deputy Lead are responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records

should be passed over to other agencies.

**CPOMS**

**CPOMS** stands for Child Protection Online Monitoring System and is used by school for monitoring child protection, safeguarding and pastoral and welfare issues. **CPOMS provides our safeguarding team with a system to** help with the management of child protection, behavioral issues, bullying, special educational needs and domestic issues. Every member of staff across school has an obligation to report any concerns which they may have. **CPOMS** allows this information to be recorded in a central repository and have relevant people alerted immediately. Designated Safeguarding Leads (and relevant staff e.g. SENDCO) are able to build a chronology around a pupil and can produce reports for **Case Conference Meetings**, **Governors** and **other professionals very easily.**

All concerns logged on CPOMs should be factual and not include the opinions of the recording member of staff. A child’s child protection record on CPOMs can be printed out or passed on to a receiving school electronically (should the receiving school also use CPOMs). As a record of all safeguarding concerns, this record should be passed on in its entirety, to the next educational setting.

The Designated Leads can see all referrals and subsequent actions.

There is a clear system in school for staff to register ‘Notes of Concerns’ through the CPOMS system. Guidance on what may trigger a ‘Note of Concern’ is shared at safeguarding training and relevant updates. Concerns may include things such as: persistent tiredness; student frequently asks to go to the toilet, begins to show inappropriate behaviour, displays weight loss, becomes withdrawn, is persistently angry, is inexplicably agitated or aggressive, is tearful for no apparent reasons, starts hurting other pupils, steals food, appears unkempt, etc.

If staff do have any concern that are not explicit safeguarding / child protection issues, they should add this concern to CPOMS, which is then directed to the safeguarding team and relevant staff. Staff may also log such things as behaviour incidents, SEND or Vulnerable Pupils information or conversations with parents on CPOMS if they feel that they are relevant to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Staff should remember that information on CPOMS is both sensitive and confidential. They must not discuss this confidential information with other staff members or leave the site open in view at school or public places. Any queries should be directed to the Designated Safeguarding Leads. It is possible to upload scanned versions of paper documents to a child’s CPOMs record.

Hard Copies

Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect are stored apart from normal pupil or staff

records. Normal records sometimes have markers to show that there is sensitive material stored

elsewhere. This is to protect individuals from accidental access to sensitive material by those who

do not need to know.

Child protection records are stored securely, with access confined to specific staff, e.g. the

Designated Safeguarding Lead Deputy Lead and the Headteacher.

Updates

Child protection records are reviewed regularly to check whether any action or updating is needed.

This includes monitoring patterns of complaints or concerns about any individuals and ensuring

these are acted upon.

When children transfer school, their safeguarding records are also transferred. Safeguarding records

will be transferred separately from other records and best practice is to transfer these directly to a

Designated Safeguarding Lead in the receiving school, with any necessary discussion or explanation

and to obtain a signed and dated record of the transfer (see also previous information regarding

electronic CPOMS transfers). In the event of a child moving out of area and a physical handover not

being possible then the most secure method should be found to send the confidential records to a

named Designated Safeguarding Lead and a photocopy kept. Files requested by other agencies (e.g.

Police) should be copied.

**Emergency Contacts for Children**

School has at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home.

**Support to pupils and school staff**

Support to Pupils

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and view the world in a positive way. For such children school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components of their lives. Other children may be vulnerable because, for instance, they have a disability, are in care, or are experiencing some form of neglect. We will seek to provide such children with the necessary support and to build their self-esteem and confidence.

This school recognises that children sometimes display abusive behaviour and that such incidents

must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

Complaints or concerns raised by pupils will be taken seriously and followed up in accordance with

the school’s complaints process.

Support for Staff

As part of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, staff may

hear information, either from a child as part of a disclosure or from another adult that will be

upsetting. If a member of staff is distressed as a result of dealing with a child protection

concern, they should in the first instance speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or a Deputy,

about the support they require. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should then seek to arrange

the necessary support.

**Working with parents/carers**

The school will:

* Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
* Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS-Children’s Social Care) or another agency, unless to do so would place the child at risk of harm or compromise an investigation. DFE and Local Authority guidelines will always be adhered to.

**Other Relevant Policies**

The Governing Body’s statutory responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond

simply child protection. The duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and

functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies and

procedures/protocols.

For instance:

* Behaviour
* Racist Incidents
* Anti-Bullying/Peer on Peer Abuse (including Cyberbullying)
* Physical Interventions/Restraint (DfE guidance “Use of Reasonable

Force” and “Screening, Searching and Confiscation”)

* Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
* Educational Visits
* Work experience and extended work placements
* First aid and the administration of medication
* Health and Safety
* Sex and Relationships Education
* Site Security
* Equal Opportunities/Race Relations
* Toileting/Intimate care
* Online Safety (E-safety/Safer online)
* Extended school activities

The above list is not exhaustive, but, when undertaking development or planning of any kind, the school needs to consider the implications for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Allstaff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

Allstaff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

• bullying (including cyberbullying);

• physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

• sexual violence and sexual harassment;

• sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and

• initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

All staff are clear as to the school’s policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child’s life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children’s social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that the school provides as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

Peer-on-peer abuse includes bullying, physical abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexting, and so-called initiation ceremonies. Our behaviour policy states how the school deals with these particular issues, how the risk of peer-on-peer abuse is going to be minimised, how these incidents are recorded, investigated and dealt with, and how the victims, and perpetrators, are to be supported. This abuse should always be treated seriously, and never just as banter or part of growing up. Staff need to understand what’s meant by peer-on-peer abuse, and how the school is dealing with it.

**Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

The ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ guidance, which was published by the government in December 2017, has now been republished with a May 2018 date. A summary of the document has now been included in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) as Part 5, which gives it statutory status. As a school we make sure that all their systems and policies, procedures, and training includes sexual violence and sexual harassment.

**Actions to be taken**

As a staff we have agreed on the following lines of action for suspected/alleged acts of bullying (peer on peer abuse) of varying levels of severity. We will show every child involved that we care about our pupils, that unacceptable acts will not be tolerated and that our responses are corrective. The affected child’s well-being is of paramount importance.

In less serious cases, the classroom teacher may feel it important to deal with an incident themselves. In more serious cases, the Headteacher and/or the Deputy/Assistant Headteacher will commit themselves to interviewing those involved and establishing punishments and counselling. All relevant members of staff will be informed of incidents and reminded of the need to be vigilant around the school. Records of incidents will be logged on CPOMs.

Immediate Response:

• Take the incident or report seriously.

• Take action as quickly as possible but remain calm.

• Reassure the victim-do not allow them to feel inadequate, foolish or frightened, or indeed responsible.

• Offer concrete help, advice or support to the victim(s).

• Make it clear to the instigator that you disapprove of their negative behaviour. Do not bully the bully(s)/instigator(s).

Further Action

Effective action will take time. Discussions are part of the healing process. Time must be given to discuss:

• the behaviour of the instigator(s)

• the sequence of events with the injured party

• the role of the bystanders and the appropriateness of the actions

Once a negative situation has been detected, the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or the Assistant Headteacher will be involved as follows:

• The affected child/children will be interviewed individually and information recorded.

• The instigator will be interviewed individually and records of the interviews taken.

• If more than one instigator is involved, the group will be called together as a whole. Each individual will need to acknowledge full responsibility for their behaviour. There is no excuse for peer on peer abuse and responses suggesting this are unacceptable. Each group member is to be made aware of the explanations of the others so that there is less opportunity for deceit.

• Parents of the instigator(s) will be informed of events and actions that are to take place.

• Agree on a direct punishment for the instigator(s), one that is appropriate to the incident e.g. loss of a privilege, close supervision at break times, which may eventually lead to suspension.

Whatever punishment is administered, it is essential to explain why that punishment was chosen and given.

• Counsel the affected child/children but do not be over-protective. Teach the affected child/children to be more socially skilled and assertive.

• Counsel the instigator(s). Aim to place them in a caring responsible role. It may be possible to involve them in peer tutoring, or to foster some sort of relationship with younger children in school. Teach the instigator(s) to control their aggression and encourage empathy.

• Records from interviews will be logged. The situation will be monitored for an appropriate period of time and both the affected child and the instigator(s) should feel they can talk to a preferred member of staff about their feelings and problems etc.

Peers will be informed about serious incidents. Abuse is not a secretive act. Peer pressure is often a most powerful corrective influence. Once dealt with, the incident will not ‘live on’, and the instigator(s) is/are to be given support and the approval of others.

If the above strategy of allowing the instigator(s) the opportunity to stop their actions is not effective within a short time scale then the parents of the instigator(s) will be invited into school to discuss the situation with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Strategies and punishments will be reviewed. Parents, whilst hoping their children are never abused by their peers at school, equally hope that their children are never instigators of such behaviour, and are therefore very supportive of any actions taken by the school.

**Strategies for the Anti-Bullying (Anti-Peer on Peer Abuse) Atmosphere**

The pupils themselves have become more confident with the active role played by staff in the event of an incident. However, our ultimate aim is to provide children with the skills necessary to help them deal with aggressive emotions, to develop confidence and to teach them cooperative social skills and thus diffuse incidents in the future.

The issue of peer on peer abuse must be a regular part of the curriculum, rather than a ‘topic’ to be addressed once or twice in the child’s primary education. The children need to be shown that staff will discuss and help with developing relationships. To this end they need to be taught and encouraged to develop a vocabulary, which will help them discuss the problems which they face.

Curriculum opportunities, evidenced in planning, should regularly arise which allow and encourage children to express their feelings, share their fears and resolve conflict. Some may choose to timetable it as part of the themes for Religious Education, stories or poems. It may be that television programmes could provide realistic opportunities for discussion. Drama activities might provide a non-threatening forum for exploration of these themes. Science health units can also provide activities and discussion points. A carefully planned curriculum will ensure plenty of important stimuli, which will help children to deal with what is a very real and often overwhelming problem.

Teachers play a major role in the prevention of peer on peer abuse. As a school we recognise the importance of personal, social, spiritual, cultural and moral education. We provide children with an active and interesting curriculum, which teaches children important skills and values. As a staff we aim to demonstrate cooperative and caring behaviour. Our discipline in the school encourages children to take responsibility for their own actions.

Our long-term aim is to develop independent, confident and happy children who value one another and respect each other’s individuality. Within this context lie our action plans for dealing with incidents of peer on peer abuse with children. Our children are taught a vocabulary which enables them to communicate incidents. They are confident that they will be taken seriously and will see staff acting promptly and effectively. A partnership between home and school, and our commitment and willingness to learn from incidents of abuse, enables us to continuously re-assess our policy and so provide children with a caring, nurturing environment.

**Safeguarding children with SEND**

The school recognises the additional safeguarding challenges for children with SEN and Disabilities including:

* awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just a pupil’s special educational need or disability;
* higher risk of peer group isolation;
* disproportionate impact of bullying; and
* difficulties with communication

The school considers extra pastoral support and mentoring for children with SEN and Disabilities.

**Online Safety**

Pupils do not use their own mobile phones in school, thus having the ability to access their own data. If a child comes to school with a phone, it is turned off and handed into the school office, to then be collected by the child, or an adult responsible for the child, when they leave the premises.

**Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

The school’s safer recruitment processes are based on the Statutory Guidance: ‘Keeping children

safe in education’ (September 2019). The school will provide all relevant information in references

for a member of staff about whom there have been concerns about child protection / inappropriate

conduct. Cases in which an allegation has been proven to be unsubstantiated, false or malicious will

not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all

been found to be unsubstantiated, malicious etc. will also not be included in a reference.

The school has an open safeguarding ethos regularly addressing safeguarding responsibilities during

staff meetings and fostering an ongoing culture of vigilance. All new staff and volunteers receive a

safeguarding induction and are briefed on the code of conduct for adults working with children. The

HM Government documents ‘Keeping children safe in education (September 2019) Part 1’ and

‘Annex A’, as well as ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused-Advice for practitioners’

(March 2015) are given to all staff and are the basis for the safeguarding induction.

On every interview panel for school staff at least two staff members will have undertaken safer

recruitment training.

**Monitoring and Reviewing**

The policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT Designated Safeguarding Leader in consultation with the Headteacher, the Governors and the Chair of Governors.

It will be updated, modified or amended as necessary.

**Signed:……………………………………………………….. Date:…………………**

**(Designated Safeguarding Lead)**

**Signed:……………………………………………………….. Date:…………………..**

**(Headteacher)**

**Signed:……………………………………………………….. Date:…………………..**

**(Chair of Governors)**