

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy was written and adapted on _____

The policy to be reviewed on _____

It should be noted that practical advice for staff is provided in appendices 1, 2 and 3, which will become part of the Staff Handbook from September 2005.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The staff and governors of Chingford Foundation School recognise that they have a duty under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, must play a full and active part in protecting pupils from harm.
- 1.2 All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.3 The aims of this policy are:
 - 1.3.1 To safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in the school. [*See Appendix 2 for categories of abuse*]
 - 1.3.2 To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
 - 1.3.3 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm. The Designated Teachers are Ms C Smith, Deputy Headteacher and Mrs D Coombs, Year Manager.
 - 1.3.4 To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
 - 1.3.5 To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse. [*See Appendix 3*]
 - 1.3.6 To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services.
 - 1.3.7 To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked. [*See 2.4*]

2.0 Procedures

- 2.1 Our school procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the All London Child Protection procedures. We will ensure that:
 - 2.1.1. We have designated staff who undertake regular training *[see 1.3.3.]* and these are made known to all staff as they join the school.
 - 2.1.2 All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse. *[See Appendix 2]*
 - 2.1.3 All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. *[See Appendices 1 and 3]*
 - 2.1.4 All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures via the first newsletter of the Autumn Term each year.
- 2.2 Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- 2.3 All new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school.
- 2.4 All new staff to the school are appointed only after a satisfactory check with the Criminal Records Bureau. Visitors to school who will have any access to pupils will always be supervised by a member of school staff.

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 The designated teachers are responsible for:
 - 3.1.1 Adhering to the Area Child Protection Committee [ACPC], LEA and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse. These procedures are all in line with the All London Child Protection [ALCP] procedures.
 - 3.1.2 Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
 - 3.1.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
 - 3.1.4 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records and monitoring pupils whose names are on the register in line with the agreements in the Child Protection Plan, which is written by professionals when children are put on the register.
 - 3.1.5 Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services.

- 3.1.6 Preparing reports for Child Protection conferences in accordance with the guidance contained in Circular 10/95 [Protecting Children from Abuse – The Role of the Education Service].
- 3.1.7 Participating in multi-agency strategy discussions.
- 3.1.8 Students will be reminded in the Autumn term to share any concerns with a teacher they know well [by their Year Manager].

4.0 Supporting Children

- 4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self-blame.
- 4.2 We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 4.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 4.4 Our school will support all pupils by:
 - 4.4.1 Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness and taking steps to eliminate aggression or bullying.
 - 4.4.2 Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
 - 4.4.3 Ensuring that pupils know that teachers will listen and support and that they should tell about abuse or ill treatment at home or school.
 - 4.4.4 Pupils should also be informed that they can ask to use a telephone to ring agencies such as Childline or Social Services directly themselves.
 - 4.4.5 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
 - 4.4.6. Notifying Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
 - 4.4.7 Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

5.0 Confidentiality

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- 5.2 The Headteacher or Designated Teachers will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

6.0 Supporting Staff

- 6.1 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

7.0 Allegations against staff

- 7.1 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- 7.2 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.
- 7.3 The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LEA Lead Officer for Child Protection.
- 7.4 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LEAs Lead Officer for Child Protection.
- 7.5 The school will follow All London Procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school.
- 7.6 It should be noted that the Staff Handbook gives clear and detailed guidance about restraint of pupils.

8.0 Whistle-blowing

- 8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

- 8.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

9.0 Physical Intervention

- 9.1 Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out separately and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Or to the child him/herself [*See 7.6*]
- 9.2 We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

10.0 Bullying

- 10.1 Our policy on bullying is set out in the Behaviour Management Policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

11.0 Racist Incidents

- 11.1 Our policy on racist incidents is set out in the Promoting Race Equality Policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

12.0 Prevention

- 12.1 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- 12.2 The school community will therefore:
- 12.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
 - 12.2.2 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
 - 12.2.3 Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHCE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

13.0 Health & Safety

- 13.1 Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.
- 13.2 CCTV, Security Staff and school staff vigilance will minimise the possibility of intruders entering the school premises.

Appendix 1**Practice**1. General Concerns

- A member of staff concerned about the physical and/or social and/or emotional “appearance” of the child should make detailed notes of the concerns. [An example may be a Form Tutor who notices changed behaviour, appearance, attendance/punctuality patterns etc.]



- The concerns are discussed with the Year Manager.



- The concerns are discussed with a Child Protection Designated teacher



- Appropriate professional advice is sought from internally or externally, as necessary



- Formal referral to Social Services is made as necessary and copied to Education Welfare Service by fax.



- The school works with Social Services.



- Parental consultation takes place if appropriate [ie all professionals deem that the concern is not resultant from inappropriate/illegal activity within the family].



- A plan is drawn up to resolve the concern.



- The progress of the student is closely monitored by relevant professionals, eg Form Tutor, Year Manager, School Nurse, Designated Teacher.



- Continuing failure to thrive would result in a formal referral.

2. Where it is deemed that the child is at risk of “significant harm”

- The member of staff to whom a disclosure is made or who suspects, reports this directly to a Child Protection designated teacher.
- ↓
- As much background information is collated as possible, to include discussion with the child.
- ↓
- The Headteacher and other designated CP teachers are apprised of the situation.
- ↓
- The formal referral is made by telephone or fax. A telephone referral is followed up with a fax.

ALL STEPS UNDER 1 AND 2 SHOULD BE FULLY DOCUMENTED WITH DATE, TIME, SOCIAL SERVICES STAFF SPOKEN TO, ETC. A FORMAL REFERRAL MUST ALWAYS BE COPIED TWICE FOR EWS AND SCHOOL CP FILE.

- The child is kept informed about what is happening in a manner appropriate to his/her age group and level of maturity. The child is offered respite from lessons if required, but may wish to return to timetabled lessons
- ↓
- As the end of the school approaches, clarification will be sought regarding the progress of the referral. The school does not have the right to keep the student at school past the end of the school day.
- ↓
- In the event of an incident at the end of the school day, a referral to Social Services should be made in the same way, recognising that the school does not have the right to keep the student past the end of the school day. Where necessary, the police should be informed of the basis of evidence for concern about the child returning home that evening and advice sought about steps to take. As necessary, Borough Legal Services should be contacted for advice. It is vital that all documentation in such a case carried precise timings of events and names of those consulted with.

Follow up

The school will work closely with other agencies on the delivery of the Child Protection Plan.

The Designated Teacher directly involved will attend case conferences and strategy meetings.

Appendix 2**CATEGORIES OF ABUSE FOR REGISTRATION**

[for further explanation see below]

NEGLECT

Failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger – resulting in significant 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.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child 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.

SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are 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 covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Running away

SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
- Displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Tendency to cry easily
- Regression to younger behaviour, such as thumb-sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Complaints of genital itching or pain
- Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, baby-sitter or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal

SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-depreciation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour [for example, rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking]
- Self mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug-solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

Appendix 3**DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES****RECEIVE**

Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of disclosing. Children may retract what they have said if they meet revulsion or disbelief.

Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking “*Why did you not tell me before?*”.

REASSURE

- Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It is essential to be honest with the child, so don't make promises you may not be able to keep, for example “I'll stay with you” or “Everything will be alright now.”
- Do not promise confidentiality. You have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.
- Try to alleviate any feeling of guilt that the child displays. For example, you could say “*You're not to blame*” or “*You are not alone, you are not the only one that this sort of thing has happened to.*”
- Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.
- Empathise with the child – don't tell them what they should be feeling.

REACT

- React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter; but do not interrogate them for full details.
- Do not ask leading questions. Such questions may invalidate your evidence [and the child's] in any later prosecution in court. Instead ask open questions like “*Anything else to tell me?*” or “*and*”.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat everything to another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.
- Inform the designated teacher for child protection.
- Try to see the matter through yourself and keep in contact with the pupil.

- Ensure that if a Social Services interview is to follow, the pupil has a “support person” present if they wish [possibly yourself].

RECORD

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible ensuring that the date, time and staff name are noted.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
- Record the date, time and place of any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. If the child uses their family’s own private sexual words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into “proper” words.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of bruising.
- Be objective in your recording; include statements and observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

DISCLOSURE: A QUICK CHECKLIST FOR STAFF

DO:

- Reassure.
- Find a quiet place to talk where you will not be interrupted.
- Listen but do not pressurise.
- Ascertain the facts – Who? What? Where? When? How?
- Reassure the pupil that he/she has done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell the child you believe them.
- Tell the child you will have to involve others to ensure the child’s safety in the future. Tell the child who needs to be involved and why.
- Offer ongoing support and that you will do your best to protect the child.
- Follow the school’s internal policy regarding communication in relation to Child Protection.
- Do not be surprised if you need support as you support a child. Tell the designated teacher or an experienced colleague how you feel. You, too, may need reassurance about the actions you have taken and what is happening outside of the school to support the pupil who has trusted you with the information.