

Benthal School

Child Protection Policy



Review Date: September 2016

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:	Sandra Chin
DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:	Deputy Headteachers
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:	Chair of Governors (Kathy Adams)

1. PURPOSE

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Schools should work with Social Care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)– DfE, July 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

The document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education – DFE, July 2015) **MUST** be read in conjunction with this policy and should be kept as an appendix to the school's child protection policy.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Benthall School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (the Children Act 1989).

2.2 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (*Section 157 for Independent schools*) places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

2.3 There are three main elements to our Child Protection policy:

- **Prevention** through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to pupils.
- **Protection** by following agreed procedures and ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- **Support** to pupils who may have been abused.

2.4 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers, students and visitors to our school.

2.5 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. SCHOOL POLICY

We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school therefore aims to:

- Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- Ensure pupils receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships
- Include in the curriculum material which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills
- Protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values and to promote respect for all others
- Facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government
- Make parents/carers aware of the school policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies

4. FRAMEWORK

4.1 Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the City and Hackney Children's' Safeguarding Board (CHCSB)

<http://www.chscb.org.uk/>

4.2 In Hackney all professionals must work in accordance with the Child Well Being Model

<http://www.eastlondon.nhs.uk/>

4.3 Our school also works in accordance with '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' (DfE, 2015), '[Working Together](#)' (DfE, March 2015) and '[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#)' (ESCB, 2013)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

<http://www.escb.co.uk/Portals/15/Documents/Local%20Practices/Effective%20Support%20for%20Children%20and%20Families%20in%20Essex%20April%202013.pdf>

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **All** adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our school carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the first page of this document.

5.2 It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that all child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to Hackney Children's Social Care Service in accordance with CHCSB procedures. If for any reason the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will act in their absence. Additionally, it is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure all staff employed including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors within the school are aware of the school's child protection procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, July 2015) identifies three main areas of responsibility for Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- Managing child protection referrals
- Training
- Raising awareness

5.3 The Governing Body and School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children (see '*Safer Recruitment*' procedures for further information)

5.4 The Designated Governor for Safeguarding ensures there is an effective child protection policy in place and that this is updated annually. Governors must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

5.5 The Headteacher and / or the Designated Safeguarding Lead provide an annual report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.

5.6 The Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Governor will undertake an annual Safeguarding Audit in line with their responsibilities under S.175 (and S.157 for *Independent schools*) of the Education Act 2002.

5.7 The school will publish its Child Protection policy on its school website alongside 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2015).'

5.8 The school will actively promote online safety on its website and signpost stakeholders to information that will help keep children safe online.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board Guidelines (2014)
- London Child Protection Procedures www.londoncp.co.uk/
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015)

6.2 When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of our school's Child Protection policy, told who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) is and is informed how to share concerns with the designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.

6.3 Staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. There may be other adults in the school who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the school staff. However the

Headteacher will ensure they are aware of the school's policy and the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy and how to report any concerns.

6.4 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

6.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Hackney Children's Social Care service by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the London Child Protection procedures and in the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board Guidelines (2014)

6.6 The telephone referral to Hackney Children's Social Care service must be confirmed in writing within 48 hours on the www.hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/agency-referral-form form. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given.

6.7 The school will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with the parents or carers, unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from the First Response Team (FRT) on 020 8356 5500 and / or the Metropolitan Police.

6.8 If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-consideration.

6.9 Safeguarding contact details will be kept prominently displayed in the school to ensure that all staff have unfettered access to safeguarding support.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

7.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) will undergo updated child protection training every two years. The Headteacher, all staff members and governors will undergo child protection training which is updated regularly.

7.2 The school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters as appropriate

7.3 The Headteacher will provide support and supervision to staff involved in child protection issues.

7.4 All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the Staff Handbook / Code of Conduct.

8. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee

confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret as, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

8.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held treated confidentially.

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

9.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen (if appropriate using a body map to record), putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This should be presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) who will then decide on appropriate action.

9.3 Any file notes are kept in a confidential file in chronological order (which is separate to pupil files) and stored in a secure place in the Head teachers office. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 35 years after the last entry (in line with ECC policy).

9.4 If a pupil transfers from the school, these files will be copied and forwarded to the pupil's new educational setting, marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES, CORE GROUP MEETINGS OR CHILD IN NEED MEETINGS

10.1 It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the school is represented at and that a report is submitted to any child protection conference called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

10.2 If a child is made subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need Plan, it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation. If the school are part of the core group then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure that the school is represented and contributes to the plan at these meetings; that there is a record of attendance and issues discussed. All concerns about the child protection plan and / or the child's welfare should be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting unless the child is at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead must inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

11. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

11.1 Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

11.2 Our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children.

11.3 Our school will endeavour to support all pupils through:

- The SEAL/PHSE curriculum to encourage our pupils to stay safe, develop healthy relationships, self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The consistent implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
- A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop open and honest and supportive relationships with parents, with the child's best interest as paramount
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in all child protection situations.
- Recognition that children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

12. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A MEMBER OF STAFF

12.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.

12.2 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Care Services, the Police or in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.

12.3 The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out in the SET procedures.

12.4 Where an allegation against a member of staff has been made, the Head Teacher or another senior manager will immediately telephone the City and Hackney Children's Safeguarding Service on 020 8356 4826 or seek advice at http://www.chscb.org.uk/files/CDM_n7375296_v1_Allegations_against_staff_leaflet_final.pdf . A Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to pupils and parents.

13. WHISTLEBLOWING

13.1 All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues in line with the schools Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy.

13.2 Any staff member can press for re-consideration of a case if they feel a child's situation does not appear to be improving. They must refer their concerns to Hackney Children's Social Care Service directly on 020 8356 4844 if they have concerns for the safety of a child.

