

D1a CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Reviewed and updated: October 2018

Next review: October 2019

Suitable for: all types of school

Status: statutory.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the general duty of all schools and academies under sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002, our sex and relationship education policy, pupil behaviour for learning policy, home learning policy, drugs education policy, health and safety policy, e-safety policy and attendance policy. We also have policies and procedures in place to promote safe recruitment and to deal with any allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff.

Introduction

The Children Act 1989 gave every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquires made to safeguard his or her welfare. Under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 as amended and The Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011, the governors and staff of all maintained schools, non-maintained special schools and academies have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangement within each school to identify, help protect, and support those children who are suffering harm. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also places a duty on governing boards of maintained schools to promote well-being, including protection from harm and neglect.

Governing boards of all maintained schools and academies have a responsibility for drawing up child protection procedures. However, the headteacher, or another senior member of teaching staff, and a governor, should have designated responsibility for child protection. In its most recent documentation, the DFE describes this role as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). This may be the deputy headteacher in a primary school or one of the senior pastoral staff or deputy headteachers in a secondary school. In a large school, there may well be a need for deputy DSLs.

It is now a mandatory requirement for all staff to be informed who is the DSL (and deputies as appropriate) in their school. Regular updates to the school's safeguarding policy must also be produced and staff kept informed.

The DSL should co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with agencies such as the social services department and the local safeguarding children board (LSCB). Both these bodies should have agreed local procedures for dealing with cases of suspected or alleged abuse. Reports and circulars from the DFE give guidance to governors, headteachers and DSLs. Additional guidance for schools can be found in:

- 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006' as updated by new legislation on 31 August 2018.
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' July 2018 and DFE advice 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' – Advice for practitioners' March 2015.
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2018. All schools and colleges must have regard to this statutory guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and students. This guidance contains five sections and it is advised that all staff should least read part 1 of the guidance.

- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales revised July 2016 and DFE advice 'The Prevent Duty – departmental advice for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism' August 2015.

Child protection procedures

All schools should have procedures for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, but the responsibility for investigating such cases lies with other agencies.

Headteachers need to:

- Ensure the school practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Put in place procedures for handling cases of suspected abuse (including allegations against teachers) which are consistent with those agreed by the LSCB and easily available to all staff for reference.
- Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Appoint a DSL to co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with other agencies on suspected abuse cases.
- Make certain that the DSL receives appropriate training and support and ensure that all staff are appropriately trained to be alert to signs of possible abuse and know to whom to report any concerns or suspicions.
- Make sure all staff know what immediate action to take if necessary in the absence or unavailability of DSLs.
- Make parents and pupils aware of the school's child protection policy.

Child protection at our school

At our school, we establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. We ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried and we include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse. All students receive an annual safeguarding and support assembly and booklet, in September. Mid -Year Admissions are issued with the booklet when they join the school.

We follow the procedures set out by the LSCB and take account of guidance issued by the DFE to:

- Ensure we have a DSL for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The DSL will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other agencies. We have a safeguarding team that consists of the DSL, two Assistant DSL's and three additional colleagues including the Headteacher who have undertaken Level 3 safeguarding training. In addition, the two Deputy Headteachers have undertaken Level 3 safeguarding training.

Reference: Appendix 1 to see current staff.

- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.

Reference: Appendix 1 to see current governors

- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and member of the governing board knows the name of the DSL responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the systems in the school which support safeguarding, understand their responsibilities (as laid out in the Teacher's Standards 2015) in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL responsible for child protection.
- Ensure all staff have regularly updated training and that staff receive regular safeguarding updates (at least annually) to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection. We include this in our parent handbook and publish our responsibilities on the school website.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed. For the majority of work in schools, governing boards and academy trusts must obtain an enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) certificate in respect of any person before the person's appointment.

In all cases where abuse is suspected or a sustainable allegation is made, teachers and other members of staff should report the information to the DSL. The DSL should refer these cases to, or discuss them with, the investigating agencies according to the procedures for maintained schools by the local authority (LA). Reference should be made to the latest edition (March 2015) of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners'.

If the DSL is unsure about whether a case should be formally referred or has a general concern about a child's health or development, s/he can seek advice and support from the local social services department, the NSPCC or the LA's child protection co-ordinator. The participation officer may also be able to offer advice.

Whether or not to make a referral that could activate a child protection investigation is a serious decision and will require careful judgement. Where the DSL is not the headteacher, they should agree the way in which the DSL will keep the headteacher informed of a case.

When referring a case of suspected or alleged abuse, the DSL should ask to be informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies which will decide whether and how to investigate. The DSL may wish to clarify with the investigating agencies when, how and by whom, the parents and the child will be told that a referral has been made, bearing in mind that the abuser is frequently known to the child and may be a close relative.

A member of staff, either the DSL or the member of staff who knows the child best, should be prepared to contribute to the strategy discussion by using the school's knowledge of the child.

Designated safeguarding lead

The DSL has specific responsibility for the co-ordination of child protection procedures within the school and for liaison with social services and other agencies.

All staff members need to be made aware of who the DSL is, as all cases of suspected abuse should be reported to him or her in the first instance.

The DSL needs to have appropriate training and should know:

- How to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and when to make a referral.
- The LSCB and/or LA procedures and the DSL role within them.
- The role and responsibilities of the investigating agencies and how to liaise with them.
- The requirements of record keeping.
- The conduct of a child protection conference and how the DSL, or another member of staff, can make an appropriate contribution to it.
- The latest government guidance (September 2018) recommends that schools should also have a deputy DSL who can cover some of the tasks of the DSL but who may not take on the full responsibilities of the role. We have this structure as part of our safeguarding team, where one of the deputy DSL's has responsibility for LADO and staff referrals, and the other deputy DSL has responsibility for Looked After Children.

Designated governor

- Governing boards should have a named governor who is elected by the governing board and who liaises with the DSL concerning any issues of child protection or safeguarding.
- The governor should oversee the implementation of the policy and associated procedures and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- S/he should have undertaken the relevant LSCB training.
- S/he will make periodic reports to the governing board on the way in which the school is fulfilling its safeguarding duties.

Ofsted

The assessment of the quality of leadership and management made during an Ofsted inspection includes an assessment of the safeguarding arrangements in place in the school or college to ensure that there is safe recruitment and that all children are safe.

Context of child abuse

Child abuse is frequently at the hands of a person known to the child. There are several types of abuse – mental, physical, sexual and emotional abuse – all of which can form the basis of bullying. What needs to be remembered is that a high percentage of bullies have themselves been abused so that history is repeating itself.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. At school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour for learning policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, child and adult mental health service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Symptoms of abuse

Signs of physical abuse include:

- Injuries that are not adequately explained by the pupil.
- Current bruising injury, with a long history of bruises and accidents.
- Injuries getting progressively worse, or occurring in a time pattern (eg, every Tuesday morning or after visits to relatives).
- 'Grip' marks on arms (may indicate severe shaking) or 'slap' markings (especially cheeks, buttocks, arms or legs).
- Long marks which could be from a belt or cane.
- Stub marks that might be from a cigarette.
- Bruising on both sides of the ear. Any 'symmetrical' bruising is suspicious.
- Teeth marks from a bite.
- Scalding to both soles of the feet.
- Bruised eyes, especially if both at once. (A doctor or the school nurse can usually tell whether the bruised eye is spread-bruising from an accidental bump to the nose or more likely to have been a fist to the eye).

- Constant attention seeking; over-pleasing/compliant behaviour, 'frozen watchfulness'.
- Running away.
- Kept away from school medical inspections and check-ups.
- Reluctant to go home after school.

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 or publicly playing with themselves.
- Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, a baby-sitter or lodger.
- Unexplained gifts or money.
- Depression and withdrawal.
- Apparent secrecy.
- Wetting, day or night.
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares.
- Chronic illnesses, especially throat infections and venereal disease.
- Anorexia or bulimia.
- Self-mutilation, attempted suicide, frequently running away.
- Unexplained pregnancy.
- Fear of undressing for gym.
- Phobias or panic attacks.

Signs of emotional abuse include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags.
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.

- Continual self-depreciation.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Neurotic behaviour (eg, rocking, hair-twisting, thumb sucking).
- Self-mutilation.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging.

Signs of neglect include a child who:

- Looks extra thin and poorly.
- Is well below average in height and weight; 'failing to thrive'.
- Complains of hunger, lacking energy.
- Has an untreated condition or injury.
- Has repeated accidents, especially burns.
- Is left alone at home inappropriately.
- Is repeatedly unwashed or smelly.
- Is kept away from school check-ups.
- Is reluctant to go home.

This is not an exhaustive list and some symptoms are indicative of all the different forms of abuse

Specific safeguarding issues

Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the following by visiting the GOV.UK website, which contains information and advice about:

- Child sexual exploitation.
- Bullying, including cyber bullying.
- County lines.

- Domestic violence.
- Fabricated or induced illness.
- Faith abuse.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.
- Gangs and youth violence.
- Gender based violence.
- Mental health.
- Private fostering.
- Radicalisation.
- Sexting.
- Teenage relationship abuse.
- Trafficking.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

One of our school's main responsibilities is the protection of pupils in our care. We want all our pupils to feel that they work and play in a secure and caring environment, free from any kind of abuse or neglect. To this end we will:

- Ensure we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensure that children and young people feel safe and secure at school.

Rationale

We recognise that the teachers and other adults at the school are well placed to observe young people and note any signs and symptoms that could lead to the early detection of child abuse. The mutual respect, trust and confidence that develop between staff and pupils can lead to pupils wanting to discuss abuse that is occurring at home and elsewhere. This can lead to the protection of children at risk. We will include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for pupils to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

Learners of all ages should be encouraged to talk in general terms about how they are and how they feel. Any learner expressing unhappiness or worry should be offered an opportunity to talk about this individually with a staff member. Children must always be listened to carefully and concerns that children raise should be taken seriously and responded to appropriately. Staff will endeavour to maintain the maximum confidentiality when listening and talking to a child, but will always make it clear that there are circumstances when ill-treatment or a crime must be reported; staff must never agree to keep information a secret.

Although we need to encourage partnership between home and school, the school acknowledges that the protection of the child is paramount. Parents and/or carers, pupils and staff should be aware that the school must take any reasonable action to ensure the safety of pupils and there may be occasions when outside agencies are consulted before parents and/or carers.

The school recognises the need to train all staff to be aware of the incidence, gravity, signs, symptoms, nature and categories of abuse and to deal with the disclosure of abuse. All staff members need to be aware of the school's procedures and the role of the education support service and other agencies so that the school can fulfil its responsibility and follow the procedures identified by the local safeguarding children board (LSCB).

Guidelines

An abused child is a boy or girl under the age of 18 who has suffered from:

- Physical injury: actual or likely injury – failure to prevent injury.
- Physical neglect: persistent or severe neglect by adults.
- Failure to be protected from exposure to any danger.
- Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child’s health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.
- 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.
- Sexual abuse: actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be so dependent and/or developmentally immature that the person or persons who had parental responsibility, charge or care of the child, either caused or knowingly failed to prevent sexual exploitation.

Reporting concerns

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral will be made to children’s social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

Under rather less immediate circumstances, any member of staff who:

- Has a suspicion that a pupil is marked or bruised in a way that is not readily attributed to ‘normal’ knocks and scrapes.
- Notes behaviours or actions in a pupil which give rise to suspicions that the pupil may have suffered abuse.
- Receives hints or a disclosure of any type of abuse from a pupil or from one of his/her friends.

has a duty to report his or her concerns as soon as possible to the DSL for child protection, or, in his or her absence, to a member of the safeguarding team or the headteacher .

In the first instance, this should be done verbally. However, as in all cases where referral to outside agencies is a possibility, accurate written records are vital. ‘The Green Form’ should be used to follow up any concern. It is important that members of staff should not investigate or follow up suspicions of child abuse themselves, for instance by speaking with and/or questioning pupils or parents.

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the headteacher, to make an informed decision as to whether to refer the case to social services. This may be immediately following the expression of concern or after discussion with the pupil, his/her parents or carers, the member of staff, other staff, and other agencies as appropriate. While staff must be circumspect about using ‘hearsay’ evidence, it must not be discounted without thought. Gossip is often, but not always, untrue. Such evidence may, together with other indicators, give us warning of an abusive situation. It is an essential requirement for all members of staff to record any conversation or contact that might be useful as evidence.

We also have a designated specifically trained teacher whose role is to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after. He/she works in close liaison with the DSL as well as the LA virtual school headteacher.

Reference: Appendix 1 to see current staff.

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the headteacher, to notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the headteacher to ensure that when a pupil on the child protection register leaves the school, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed.

All records must be kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

Staff behaviour

The highest possible standards of behaviour are expected from staff, governors and volunteers. In particular, staff should be on their guard against:

- Treating pupils or students as peers by adopting their mannerisms or slang.
- Giving inappropriate details to students of their personal lives.
- Seeming to favour particular students.
- Using physical contact with students that is secretive or of a nature that could be considered indecent.
- Not following school policy on searching students.
- Using emotional abuse against children by ignoring, ridiculing, humiliating, harassing, intimidating, bullying or continually singling out any child for negative attention.
- Dressing inappropriately.
- Failing to report concerns.

Child abuse allegations made against staff

The school has procedures in place to handle allegations made against members of staff and volunteers.

A child protection allegation made against a member of staff (including the DSL) is the responsibility of the headteacher and not the DSL for child protection. All such concerns should be accurately recorded and reported to the headteacher as soon as possible. As stated earlier, the member of staff should undertake no further investigative action. Such allegations should be referred to the local authority designated officer (LADO). Mr Clayton, Assistant DSL, has responsibility for all allegations made against a member of staff, and for LADO referrals.

A child protection allegation made against the headteacher should be accurately and promptly recorded and referred on to the chair of governors. In maintained schools, the LA, together with social services, will investigate the allegation.

There are also procedures in place to make a referral to the disclosure and barring service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.

Safer recruitment

The governing board takes every precaution to prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children. This is achieved by:

- Adhering to the statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children. In the case of a new appointment, the school follows the safer recruitment procedure required by government guidance. DBS checks on all staff are in place – teaching and non-teaching, temporary, supply or salaried trainees – and details are held on a single central record.
- Taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised.

The school has written recruitment, selection and appointment policies in place. There is always one person on any appointment panel who has undertaken safer recruitment training.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual harassment – peer on peer abuse

For school staff, identifying inappropriate sexual behaviour can be a complex task. Children and adolescents are normally sexually curious and may behave inappropriately with each other – the boundary between sexual harassment and sexually abusive behaviour can be difficult to define.

Indicators of sexually abusive behaviour include:

- A significant age difference between children involved in sexual behaviour. An adolescent who seems interested in younger children would give rise to concern.
- Sexual behaviour involving bribery, threats or force. Children without the intellectual or physical resources to resist abuse are particularly vulnerable.
- A level of sexual knowledge inconsistent with what would normally be expected.
- Sexually intrusive/aggressive behaviour – poking objects or parts of bodies into their orifices.

Defining behaviour as sexual harassment is difficult and a major issue is likely to be whether the sexual contact is consensual or not. A boy groping a girl may be an incident of inept behaviour by an immature adolescent; it may indicate that the person has the potential to become a sexual offender; it may indicate that they themselves are a victim of abuse. In all cases, it is essential that these incidents are treated seriously.

The misuse of social media between children, especially the practice of ‘sexting’, is also a form of sexual harassment or abuse and incidents, when discovered or reported, should be investigated and dealt with according to agreed school policy.

Details must be recorded accurately and passed on to the appropriate person. The needs of the victim must be addressed, in addition to ensuring that the perpetrator is dealt with in such a way that they realise the seriousness of their behaviour. Parents of both children should be contacted to give them an opportunity to support their child. It must be remembered that a criminal offence may have been committed and the parents of the victim have the right to pursue a complaint against someone who has assaulted their son/daughter. It must also be remembered that one or both parents/carers or a close relative may be the perpetrators.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (June 2015) legally requires schools to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' (the prevent duty).

A new Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Bill was published on 6 June 2018 and after going through parliament will become law in due course. But it is thought that the subsequent act, when passed, will be unlikely to impact on schools beyond the existing requirements of the prevent duty.

School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation, and general safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe.

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the headteacher, to make an informed decision as to whether to make a referral to the Channel programme within the LA.

Some common signs of abuse

- Unwillingness to come to school.
- Complaining about missing possessions.
- Unexplained bruising or time repeated bruising.
- Easily distressed and frightened.
- Odd drawing and sexually explicit language.
- Damaged or incomplete work.

Safety on and off site

The safety of children inside school, moving around, arriving and leaving the school/academy site are important considerations. Arrangements for this are set out in our health and safety policy.

Risk assessments must be completed and approved before any trips away from the site are undertaken.

Children are offered facilities for changing (and if needed for showering) that offer them the level of privacy and safety appropriate to their age.

Internet

The school has procedures in place to safeguard all learners from unlawful, sexual or otherwise potentially harmful content on the internet. Information on internet safety and the importance of monitoring internet use at home is made available to all parents annually. Information on internet safety and the importance of monitoring internet use will be made available to all parents at least annually. Reference should be made to the use of the school e-safety policy.

Parents and carers

All parents and carers should be made aware of this policy and the duties and responsibilities of the school with regard to safeguarding and child protection through a safeguarding statement displayed in the school reception area and on the school website.

Parents must always be made to feel welcomed and encouraged to discuss any concerns they have about their child at home

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually with the relevant staff and agencies. Safeguarding is a termly standing item on Full Governing Board meetings, where strategic and operational matters are reported.

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Team 2018 – 19

					
Mrs A Maidment	Mr G Clayton	Mrs D Pinnock	Miss J Callen	Mrs N Patel	Ms E Horrigan

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Mrs A Maidment

Deputy DSL – Mr G Clayton – including LADO and staff safeguarding matters

Deputy DSL – Mrs D Pinnock – including main contact for social services & Looked After Children

Miss J Callen

Mrs N Patel

Ms E Horrigan – Headteacher

Additional Level 3 Trained Staff

Mrs T Osekita

Mr R Walsh

Safeguarding Governors

Ms C Mosdell

Mr J Morse