



## Child Protection Policy

### **Introduction**

The Management and Staff of Elliott Park School take seriously our responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes the DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2019), the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Person (DSL) has overall responsibility for child protection practice in school is Sam Dolman for the main school and Colleen Hiller for Early Years. As part of the ethos of the school we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
- Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies In some situations
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication
- Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and share appropriately with other professionals
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **School**

The school is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with local and national procedure. This process implemented in April 2001 follows the requirements of the central

### **Child Protection Policy**

government guidance contained in the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The child protection process is now incorporated within a more comprehensive remit for safeguarding all children and promoting their welfare.

The role of the school within this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need including children who may have suffered, be suffering or who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The school may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

All adults in school have a role to play in relation to:

- Protecting children from abuse
- Promoting the welfare of children
- Preventing children from being harmed

**The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.**

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead Person**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Person is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating child protection action within school
- Liaising with other agencies
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns
- Making referrals as necessary
- Maintaining a confidential recording system
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency meetings in particular Child Protection Conferences
- Managing and monitoring the school's part in Child care/protection plans
- Organising training for all school staff
- Liaising with other professionals

#### **General Strategies**

This section gives an opportunity for staff to identify the specific ways in which safeguarding issues are addressed within the curriculum, policies and guidance or through school/community initiatives as part of the Every Child Matters Agenda. This may include:

- PHSE and schemes of work to empower children to better protect themselves
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-Bullying Strategies

## **Child Protection Policy**

- Care Plans/Education Plans
- e-Safety Policy
- Photographic Images of Children Policy
- Pupil Councils (consultation/children's rights)
- Complaints Procedures
- Health and Safety
- Risk Assessments
- Extra-Curricular Activities

### **Procedures**

A copy of the KSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2007) is kept in the staff room and contains detail of procedures and the categories and definitions of abuse. All staff are advised to read Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of the handbook. A copy of the Assessment Framework is kept in the school.

### **Recognition and Categories of Abuse**

All staff in school should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The signs and symptoms of abuse are listed in a leaflet distributed to all staff. A copy of the DOH guidelines 'What to do if You're Worried a Child is being Abused' is given to staff.

### **Responding to Concerns**

Concerns for a child may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure. Any member of staff who has a concern for a child however insignificant this might appear to be should discuss with the DSLP as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff he/she should:

- Allow the child to make the disclosure at his/her own pace and in his/her own way
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback)
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child does not volunteer
- Reassure the child that he/she has been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk
- Record the conversation as soon as possible
- Inform the DSLP

## Record Keeping

Staff can play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child that gives cause for concern should be recorded on an incident sheet copies of which are kept by the Headteacher (DSL/P).

It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the child. Opinions should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base which can also be quoted. Records must be signed and dated if appropriate. It is important to remember that any issues are confidential and staff should know only on a 'need to know' basis.

## Information to be Recorded

- Child's name and date of birth
- Child in normal context, e.g. behaviour, attitude (has there been an extreme change)
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and time(s)
- A verbatim record of what the child has said
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on body map
- Action taken
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## Referrals to Children's Social Services

It is the responsibility of the DSL/P to decide when to make a referral to Children's Social Services. To help with this decision s/he may choose to consult with the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection). Advice may also be sought from Social Services Duty Social Workers who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the Child in need / child protection process. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these.

Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a decision to refer to Children's Social Services is made. **In all but the most exceptional cases parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Social Services will be sought.** Referrals to Children's Social Services will be made using Kent's inter-agency referral form. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the County Duty social services office.

If a child is referred, the DSL/P will ensure that other relevant staff are informed of this.

### **Child Protection Policy**

If after consultation with the DSLP a member of staff feels that appropriate action is not being taken in respect of his/her concerns for a child s/he should refer directly to Social Services. The Headteacher should be informed of this decision. If any member of staff is unsure then advice can be sought from the LA's Area Children's Officer (Child Protection).

#### **The Child Protection Plan**

The DSLP will inform members of staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for children who are the subject of a child protection plan. These children must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on an incident sheet and passed immediately to the DSLP or the Headteacher in the DSLP's absence. The DSLP or a member of School's Management Team will be responsible for reporting or attending all child protection case conferences.

#### **Concerns Involving Members of Staff**

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Headteacher who will contact the Area Children's Officer (Child overview of the Framework for Assessment is planned for every 3 years in line with DCSF guidance).

#### **Monitoring and Review**

All school personnel will have a copy of this policy and will have the opportunity to consider and discuss its contents prior to the approval of the Management being formally sought.

This policy forms part of our school development plan and will be reviewed annually.

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its content.