



Lady Margaret School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Reviewed: July 2012

Next Review: 2015

1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR POLICY

In line with the Government's vision for all services for children and young people, 'Every Child Matters', the governors and all school staff recognise that children have a fundamental right to learn in a safe environment and to be protected from harm. Young people are less likely to learn effectively and go on to lead positive and independent lives if they are not kept healthy and safe. This school is therefore committed to providing an environment which is safe and where the welfare of each child is of paramount importance. This will include a commitment to ensuring that all pupils feel confident that any concerns they may have will be listened to and acted upon.

To this end, governors and school staff will be committed to ensuring that all members of the school community are aware of school responsibilities and procedures in this area. This will include communicating policies and procedures effectively with parents/carers, ensuring all staff and relevant governors attend appropriate training and working effectively with other professionals on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

- To raise awareness of all school staff of the importance of safeguarding and child protection, and in particular to make clear responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse;
- To ensure pupils and parents are aware that the school takes child protection seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and for dealing with allegations against staff;
- To promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together for the protection and welfare of all pupils;
- To support pupils' development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence;
- To integrate a child protection curriculum within the existing curriculum, allowing for continuity and progress through all the Key Stages;
- To make appropriate links and reference to policies in related areas such as discipline and bullying.

NB All School staff should have access to 'London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Education Welfare Advisory Service Safeguarding Children in H&F Schools – April 2007'. This covers the following areas:

- Legislative framework
- Definitions and categories of abuse and neglect
- Possible indicators of abuse and neglect
- Action by person receiving or identifying a concern
- Action by designated person
- Consent – child and parent/carer
- Recording and the referral process
- Guidelines for safe practice – professional conduct
- Reports for case conferences

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INTERVENTION TO PROTECT CHILDREN

The governors will ensure that the principles identified below, many of which derive from the Children Act 1989, are followed by all staff.

- All children have a right to be kept safe and protected from abuse;
- Child abuse can occur in all cultures, religions and social classes;
- Staff must be sensitive to the families cultural and social background;
- Children must have the opportunity to express their views and be heard
- If there is a conflict of interests between the child and parent, the interests of the child must be paramount;
- The responsibility to initiate agreed procedures rests with the individual who identifies the concern;
- All staff must endeavour to work in partnership with those who hold parental responsibility for a child
- Information in the context of a child protection enquiry must be treated as CONFIDENTIAL and only shared with those who need to know.
- All staff should have access to appropriate and regular training
- School management must allow staff sufficient time to carry out their duties in relation to child protection and safeguarding

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEAD/DESIGNATED TEACHER

Governors will ensure that the school has identified a Designated Teacher for child protection and that the Head/Designated Teacher undertakes the following responsibilities:

- To ensure all staff are familiar with school and Borough procedures and guidelines for identifying and reporting abuse, including allegations of abuse against staff;
- To ensure all staff receive training in the above, including staff who are temporary or start mid year
- To be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with school staff and support services over child protection issues;
- To be aware of all children within the school who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan or who are Looked After Children and ensure the child's social worker is informed if such children are subject of an exclusion from the school;
- To ensure the school is represented at child protection case conferences and that written reports are provided as required;
- To follow as appropriate recommendations made by Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- To be aware of new legislation, guidance, policy and procedures in the area of Safeguarding and Child protection.
- To support and advise staff on child protection issues generally.

- To disseminate relevant information between agencies to the appropriate staff e.g. to learning mentors or SSA.
- To maintain accurate and secure child protection records and send on to new schools (where relevant)

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL STAFF

- a) All school staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well being of the pupils in their school. In doing so they should seek advice and support as necessary from the Head/Designated Teacher and other senior staff members.
- b) Staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behaviour.
- c) All school staff are expected to:
 - Be able to identify signs and symptoms of abuse
 - Report concerns (including concerns about other staff/professionals) to the Designated Teacher or other senior staff members as appropriate
 - Be aware of the relevant local procedures and guidelines
 - Monitor and report as required on the welfare, attendance and progress of all pupils
 - Keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.
 - Respond appropriately to disclosures from children and young people (stay calm, reassure without making unrealistic promises, listen, avoid leading questions, avoid being judgemental and keep records).

6. APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

When appointing staff, Governors will take account of the guidance issued by the Local Authority's Human Resources Section and observe the following safeguards:

- That documentation sent out to potential candidates will make it clear that child protection is a high priority of the school and that rigorous checks will be made of any candidate before appointments are confirmed;
- That all references will be taken up and verified by telephoning referees;
- That a reference will always be obtained from the last employer;
- That at interview candidates will be asked to account for any gaps in their career/employment history;
- That candidates will be made aware that all staff are subject to a full CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check.
- That evidence of relevant checks will be recorded and stored in a single, central location, easily accessible when appropriate and necessary.

7. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

- a. Governors recognise that because of their daily contact with children in a variety of situations, including the caring role, teachers and other school staff are vulnerable to accusations of abuse.
- b. Governors further recognise that, regrettably, in some cases such accusations may be true. The governors, therefore, expect all staff to follow the agreed procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. This will initially mean a discussion with the designated teacher.

8. STAFF CONTACT WITH PUPILS

In order to minimise the risk of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with pupils, all school staff should familiarise themselves with page 6 of the guidance issued to all schools by the EWAS, Guidelines on the Use of Control and Physical Restraint by Staff and Guidance and Procedures for School Visits.

9. STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- a. Governors recognise the importance of child protection training for Designated Teachers and for all other school staff who have contact with children. The designated Governor for Child Protection will have specific training in their role, available from the Local Authority.
- b. Governors expect the Head/Designated Teacher to ensure that all school staff, including support and ancillary staff, receive training in child protection and that new staff are made aware of school policy, procedures and guidelines when they join the school and receive annual training thereafter.
- c. The Head is also expected to ensure that all staff receive regular support in respect of child protection work and know which senior member of staff to refer to for advice in the absence of the Designated Teacher.

10. CURRICULUM

The governors believe that the school curriculum is important in the protection of children. They will aim to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives (these are often met through the PSHE and citizenship curriculum):

- Developing pupil self-esteem;
- Developing communication skills;
- Informing about all aspects of risk;
- Developing strategies for self-protection;
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults;
- Developing non-abusive behaviour between pupils.

11. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Governors recognise that children with special educational needs may be especially vulnerable to abuse and expect staff to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. Indications of abuse will be reported as for other pupils. The Designated Teacher will work with the special educational needs co-ordinator to identify pupils with particular communication needs and to ensure clear guidance is available for staff in relation to their responsibilities when working with children with intimate care needs.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

Governors accept that child protection raises issues of confidentiality, which should be clearly understood by all staff.

13. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTS

- a. Governors expect all staff to maintain high quality signed and dated child protection records, which separate fact, allegation, hearsay and opinion and which clearly indicate decisions and action taken. These records may in some cases be required in court proceedings.
- b. Governors further expect school staff to assist the Children's Services Department by providing information for child protection case conferences as required.

14. MONITORING PUPILS ON THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

Governors expect the Head to ensure that teachers monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of all pupils. Relevant and pertinent information relating to children either subject to a Child Protection Plan or deemed Children in Need will be provided in a timely fashion to Children's Services staff.

15. COMMUNICATING POLICY

- a. The governors expect parents and pupils to be informed that the school has a child protection policy and is required to follow the Borough Guidelines for reporting suspected abuse to the Children's Services Department.
- b. Pupils and parents should know how the school's child protection system works and with whom they can discuss any concerns. They should also be made aware of local or national telephone help lines. A leaflet, facilitating this communication and produced by the Education Welfare Advisory Service, is available.
- c. Third parties permitted onto the school premises must adhere to this policy if they are in contact with any children.

16. MONITORING AND EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL'S POLICY.

The governors require the Head to report to them annually on the effectiveness of the school's child protection policy and on associated issues in the school over the preceding year.

17. CHILD PROTECTION IN RELATION TO OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

This child protection policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies such as behaviour and discipline, anti-bullying and use of restraint and equality policies.

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