

New City Primary School Child Protection Policy

November 2016

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1. Introduction

This policy has been developed in the recognition that many children suffer a variety of abuse in our community.

All staff received initial training on the signs and symptoms of abuse and we felt it was important to put together clear procedures to respond to staff concerns and be clear in our response to a disclosure by a child or adult. This policy is in the process of being reviewed in the light of changes in the way agencies work together. Please refer to the London child protection procedures.

2. Aims of our school policy:

- To raise awareness of all staff of the need for child protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To have a structured internal procedure to be followed by all staff in cases of suspected abuse
- To promote inter-agency working relationships
- To promote a systematic means of monitoring children thought to be at risk
- To support the development of the child/young person towards a positive self image, thereby fostering and increasing their security, confidence and independence
- To build work of child protection within the curriculum so that it helps children protect themselves and develop responsible attitudes to adult life and parenthood
- To ensure that there exist adequate mechanisms for offering ongoing support to staff members and children/young people involved in child protection cases

2.1 Policy objectives

Our School is most likely to have effective practice in relation to child protection when:

- Children feel secure, valued, encouraged to talk and listened to
- There is an ethos of mutual respect that underpins all interactions
- All adults take their responsibilities seriously, use close observation skills

and notice the children in their care

- Adults provide suitable welfare and guidance and are accessible
- Staff makes the parents aware of the schools' responsibilities, policy and procedures
- Staff are trained and supported to be vigilant and to recognise the signs and symptoms of child abuse
- Procedures are known to all staff and carried out consistently including issues concerning confidentiality
- Practice is regularly reviewed and monitored
- All staff are aware of the different social and cultural patterns and practices of the school communities and are supported to consider their concerns in context
- Information is promptly passed on to relevant professionals, when needed
- Children identified as being at risk are monitored; records are maintained of pupil's progress; reports are submitted when needed
- Relevant staff attend case conferences and are well prepared
- Up to date training on Child Protection is regularly offered
- New staff, newly qualified staff and temporary staff are given an induction to the schools procedures
- Liaison with other agencies is encouraged and supported
- Teachers use the curriculum to raise pupil's awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others

3. Context

New City Primary School services a diverse multi-cultural community. As an inclusive school, we admit a range of pupils with special educational needs. In our school we have teams of multi-disciplinary staff working in each wing. We undertake a variety of different strategies to promote the positive self-esteem of pupils as well as trying to provide an environment of trust and respect.

3.0 Summary of Advice

What schools, teachers and non-teaching staff must do:

- All staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- All schools and colleges must have a senior member of staff as their

Designated Person for Child Protection. At New City the SENCO is the Designated Person

- All schools and colleges must be aware of Area Child Protection Committee LSCB and LA procedures
- Designated Person has received the appropriate training from the LA
- The Designated Person has a responsibility to monitor attendance and development of any child who is on the child protection register and report concerns to the appropriate agency
- Documentation also states that schools and colleges have an important role:-
- At the recognition stage of referral;
- In preventing abuse through sound policies;
- In providing a curriculum that takes into account prevention of child abuse.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

There is one key principle that guides all professional responses to child protection issues. The Children Act 1989 asserts that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Therefore all staff must:

- Be aware of their contribution to providing a safe and secure environment for all pupils and to make appropriate provision for their welfare and guidance
- Be aware of all our school policies
- Know that the Designated Person is Alastair Anderson and in his absence the Head teacher Caroline Stone
- Create or contribute to the creation of a curriculum that enables children to develop self-confidence, self-esteem and the skills and understanding necessary to protect themselves and others. Please see Appendix for PSHE scheme of work and information about circle times
- The SENCO as Designated Person has a responsibility to:-
- Be fully aware of the LA and school child protection procedures
- Co-ordinate action on child abuse within the school

- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection
- Organise and deliver training on all aspects of child protection
- Provide up-to-date information, advice and support to all staff
- Adhere to procedures when reporting
- Attend LA training
- Be aware of and liaise with other agencies including the Education Welfare Service who through the EWO offers advice to schools
- Attend case conferences and, if it is impossible to attend, the school will provide a written report
- Ensure that any decisions made by the Child Protection Conference are carried out
- Monitor the child's attendance if he/she is on the child protection register
- Ensure progress and development are regularly monitored and that information is recorded in the appropriate way for pupils about whom staff have concern
- Create a plan for those who are on the register or about whom there are serious concerns
- Take a major responsibility in supporting colleagues when a disclosure has been made
- Ensure that the school identifies which children are on the register when referring a child for full assessment
- Ensure that the school passes on information immediately when a child changes school - this includes transition between KS 2 and KS 3

5. If Staff Have Concerns

5.1 All Staff have a key role in establishing a supportive school environment. They establish positive relationships between themselves and pupils, as well as setting up a framework for children to work together in an enabling way.

Concerns

Staff have a great deal of knowledge about children and their development.

Staff should be aware through observation of any changes in a child, either in health and welfare or in their approach to learning.

Children's work may often disclose information about their feelings towards

their families or friendships.

They also need to be observant about different types of behaviour, which a child might exhibit, as well as groups of children with whom they work or play.

If a member of staff is concerned about a child, for whatever reason, they should immediately share this concern with their Phase Leader.

Teams discuss and share information about the child. Decide what to record and whether to then pass on the information and concern with the Head or Deputies. As a general rule any concerns, unless very minor, should be shared with senior management.

5.2 Dealing with disclosures

Handling of the disclosure is critical to good child protection practice. For example, it may be the start of the healing process for the child or young person, or notes made at the time may be used in evidence later on. Disclosure can come from various sources: the person being abused, a friend, a parent or even the abuser.

The following points are important when dealing with a disclosure:-

- Give the child or young person time to talk in a place where you will not be interrupted
- Take what the child or young person says seriously - children rarely lie about abuse
- Stay calm; listen to the child without pressurising, without being judgmental or expressing anger or horror too strongly. The child may feel shame and guilt and may have feelings of love for the abuser, which can feel very confusing;
- Ask open-ended questions if it is necessary. Leading or probing questions may contaminate evidence needed in the future
- Do not promise confidentiality: you will have to talk to the CPCO and other agencies will have to be told. A false promise of confidentiality will lead to a betrayal of the trust placed in you. Explain to the child that to safe guard her/him you will need to talk to someone else. Let the child know that you will tell them in advance that you are going to do this. Tell the child who you will tell and what you have to do next and, if it is possible, make brief notes

- at the time on any paper that comes to hand;
- tell the Designated Person
- record as soon as possible the content of the conversation (1) separate fact from opinion and record both (2) record any noticeable non-verbal behaviour; and (3) record the actual words used by the child as far as possible rather than technical words and use a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or injury;
- Make sure you continue to support the child, providing a safe place and time throughout the process of the investigation and afterwards, get some support for yourself. Do not disclose confidential information about the child or young person to colleagues, clearly, you must tell the Designated Person the details, as this is a part of the procedure and referral system.

It is vital to tell the Designated Person of any concern about a child as soon as possible, in order that a decision to make a referral - or not - can be made. Our school is NOT an investigative agency. We must hand over this responsibility to the appropriate agency.

5.3 Confidentiality

As few people, as possible within the school must be informed when there is an incident regarding child protection, however, it is impossible to prescribe in terms of numbers.

Do not promise confidentiality, as you will have to talk to other people and agencies:

- All staff in a school are aware of the confidential nature of personal information
- All staff must know how to maintain confidentiality
- Personal information about a pupil's family is confidential
- Information of a personal nature must only be given to the appropriate person.
- If there is suspected abuse, information should be given only to the Designated Person
- Other staff only need to know as much as is necessary to act sensitively with a distressed child or young person. They do not need to know details
- The teacher to whom the disclosure is made may need support in a

- confidential manner
- The pupil, depending on his/her age, must be kept informed of who knows and, what they know, at all stages of the procedures

It is essential that files containing information about alleged abuse are kept in a secure cabinet and only accessed on a 'need to know' basis.

5.4 Recording

Clear records can be the basis of useful contributions to the case conference and possible court cases, ensuring that sound decisions are made on the child's behalf. If there has been no disclosure or the child is too young or has a communication difficulty, monitoring and recording is particularly significant.

A designated member of staff with Child Protection responsibilities must determine:

- Who decides when to start/finish recording?
- Where will the notes be kept and in what form?
- Who will have access to notes?
- Who will contribute to the notes?
- Who will collate information?
- Who will decide on further action (e.g. contact with parents/social worker?)

5.5 Categories of abuse

Some forms of abuse have no obvious signs; for example, a child who is being abused may communicate stress in a different way, i.e. by hiding it. We need to be aware of what implications there may be for children from different ethnic backgrounds, or children with disabilities or special education needs or pupils with a variety of differing communication techniques.

Listing signs and symptoms are ways of raising awareness of possible abuse, but there is often an overlap between signs and symptoms of different types of abuse.

Under the Children Act, Social Services are required to investigate if they have reasonable cause in believing a child in their area is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Significant harm must be viewed as part of a continuum of concern. Significant harm includes ill treatment and/or impairment of health or development. The Children Act states that development covers physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development.

Categories of Abuse: there are four categories - sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Always remember that there can be other explanations for such signs or behaving in such ways.

Physical abuse

The actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

Where the nature of the injury is not consistent with the explanation given by either the child or the parent OR there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is caused by persistent and/or severe emotional rejection or ill treatment. It affects the child or young person's behaviour and development. It is often difficult to substantiate. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is 'actual or likely exploitation of a child or adolescent'. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

This can include penetration of a child's vagina, anus or mouth with a finger, penis or other object; touching, rubbing or stroking or kissing of a child by an adult in a sexual manner; and adult encouraging, forcing, tricking or bribing a child to do any of the above to an adult or another child. Sexual abuse can also be an adult encouraging a child to watch or read pornographic material or making sexual suggestions to a child.

The following are always underlying factors that are present in sexual abuse: the inability of the child or young person to give their informed consent and the imbalance of power between the victim and perpetrator.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe neglect of a child, which results in serious impairment of that child's health or development. Exposure to danger or repeated failure to attend to a child's physical and developmental needs constitutes neglect.

New technologies

As with all forms of harm or abuse, there is no exhaustive list of signs or indicators to watch out for. But these can include: changes in children's behaviour, demeanour, physical appearance and presentation, language or progress.

If you are concerned that a child's safety is at risk because you suspect someone is using communication technologies (such as social networking sites) to make inappropriate contact with the child.

1. Report to and discuss with the named child protection officer in school and contact parents.
2. Advise the child on how to terminate the communication and save all evidence.
3. Contact CEOP <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>
4. Consider the involvement of police and social services.
5. Inform LA e-safety officer.

Children should be confident in a no-blame culture when it comes to reporting inappropriate incidents involving the internet or mobile technology: they must be able to do this without fear.

PLEASE SEE SCHOOL E-SAFETY POLICY FOR FURTHER DETAIL ON USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN SCHOOL AND WIDER COMMUNITY.

6. The Designated Person

A referral is only made in the absence of satisfactory explanation for the cause of your concern or if a disclosure has been made.

When making a referred telephone call to Newham Triage Safeguarding Services need the following information when you telephone (but do not delay if all the information is not available):

- your name, designation, the school's address and telephone number;
- the child's name, date of birth, address and details of other family or household members;
- the name of the general practitioner;
- the ethnic origin of the child and family, the language spoken;
- detail of the concern;
- the detail of the incident, e.g. date, time, what the referrer was told and by whom, what they heard or observed, what they said or did;
- the nature of the child's family relationship with the referrer;
- the child's past and current circumstances and behaviour;
- details of agencies known to be involved and whether the family has been informed that a referral will be made:

The central Triage No. 020 3373 4600 or logged on www.newham.gov.uk/triage.

If all else fails, telephone the Police child Protection Team (CPT) at Stratford Police Station

0208 503 1212

Other agencies that may be involved in a case of child abuse are Safeguarding Services, Health Services, Police and voluntary services. Branches of the education service that may also be involved are the Educational Psychologists. Apart from the fact that there is a legal requirement for the different services to work together, obviously a coherent approach is needed if the best interests of the child are going to be served. All of the major reports resulting from child abuse inquiries highlight good inter-agency communication as being vital.

Designated Persons must

- be clear about his/her functions and tasks in the process and have an understanding of those of other services
- establish clear lines of communication
- have an understanding of the parameters of the other services in relation

- to child protection i.e. increase empathy and decrease prejudice
- be clear what is expected of him/her at different stages in the proceedings and adhere to these expectations

7. The Initial Child Protection Conference

The child's family and all professionals working on the case are brought together for the case conference. The purpose of the child protection conference is to share information, determine the level of risk to the child and recommend appropriate action. Safeguarding Services convene the meeting.

Wherever possible the Designated Person will attend case conferences. If this is not possible the teacher attending the conference needs to be appropriately briefed and at the end of the conference, when back at school, debriefed.

The written report should cover:

- academic achievement
- peer relationships
- attendance
- what the child says to the teacher
- the demeanour of the child
- The relationship with the parent/s or carers.

A decision will be taken at the end of the child protection conference as to whether to place the child on the Child Protection Register. The Designated Person must give a recommendation to the chair, along with other agencies. The chair decides the category to place on the register or not.

A Child Protection care plan will be drawn up by Safeguarding Services who have a duty to notify the relevant school when a child's name is added to the Child Protection Register or when a child on the Register starts school.

8. Supporting abused children in school.

8.1 The development of self-esteem is a fundamental need for all pupils. For those who have been abused, it is necessary for self-esteem work to be more focused and broken down into manageable parts.

The following tasks/activities/ways of treating the child or young person are suggestions of support that may be appropriate:

- have regular routines, be consistent and reliable and set clearly defined limits
- set tasks/activities that are achievable
- offer opportunities for the pupil to demonstrate competence
- take care to notice differences in the child
- provide opportunities for the child to give and receive positive feedback from peers
- create a safe and structured way to explore feelings and values
- respond with warmth, tolerance and dignity and maintain the child's dignity
- Help the child or young person feel a sense of control over their lives

8.2 Staff who are involved may need support themselves. Staff may be supported in the following ways:-

- Recognition - the teacher involved will need time to adjust and reflect on events
- Recognition of the emotional impact on staff involved in an allegation or investigation of abuse
- Thinking through appropriate levels of support giving time out to talk it through
- Providing access to individual or whole staff counselling if needed
- Denial - staff dealing with abuse can find themselves confronted with facts that they do not like and experience distress or strong emotional reactions. A common reaction to this is denial - denial can be personal or institution
- All staff will receive training to help them deal effectively with the incident

8.3 Support to Staff and Children

It is important to support both staff and children. Staff should be paired to someone who will listen and support them particularly during the time when there may not be very much action.

Staff will need to think of ways of supporting returning children in the phase.

Role of staff.

Every member of staff has a responsibility towards all children in all areas of

child protection.

We have an obligation to safeguard all the children.

8.4 Curriculum

The curriculum offers a variety of opportunities for children to learn about protecting themselves as well as different mediums to express and disclose.

PSHE

This area enables children to learn about health issues, appropriate behaviours and relationships.

Online Safety

The Online Safety Curriculum teaches children about safe use of the internet and other forms of social networking.

The Arts Curriculum

This includes ways of expressing children's creativity and emotions such as art, music, drama, and dance.

Staff can set up opportunities to help children describe their emotions or life outside of school through these curriculum areas.

English Curriculum

This area of the curriculum allows opportunities for children to use poetry or creative writing, to talk about concerns or emotions.

Speaking and listening aspect of the National Curriculum can allow staff to set up discussion groups or with individuals about aspects of child protection.

9. Allegations against staff

Working towards a Child-Safe Newham's Child Protection Procedures for Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff, deals thoroughly with allegations against staff. (See Working towards a Child Safe Newham, section 11 [Education Department document]).

If a member of staff suspects that a colleague is abusing a child they must share that with their line manager who will inform the Head Teacher. In turn the Head will seek advice from the LADO.

If it is the Head who is suspected then staff must contact the Governors for support and advice.

10. Working in Partnership

The concept of partnership between the parents/carers and the school is important. Parents are consulted regularly and often visit the school. When a case of abuse or suspected abuse has occurred, Social Services have generally been involved.

This may leave parents/carers and teachers with a difficult relationship where both parties may feel ill at ease. We need to maintain an ethos where the need for privacy and confidentiality, within the boundaries of the child protection procedures, is overtly respected.

Awareness of and respect for different cultural backgrounds and methods of parenting and family life are important to avoid narrow judgements about what constitutes 'good' and 'bad' parenting.

It is important that parents/carers are aware of the school's policy on child protection so that they know the responsibilities that the school has in this area. 'Our first priority is your child's welfare and therefore there may be occasions when our concern about your child means that we have to consult other agencies even before we contact you'. The procedures we follow have been laid down by the school, LA, Area Child Protection Committee.

If you wish to know more about this procedure please contact Alastair Anderson -SENCO

Bibliography

- Circular 11/96 'Misconduct of Teachers and Workers with Children and Young People' DFEE 1995
- Circular 10/95 'Protecting Children from Abuse: the role of the Education

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- 'Schools and child Protection. A Training handbook for designated teachers' CEDC 1995
- 'Working Towards a Child-Safe Newham: child protection procedures for Teaching and Non-teaching Staff'
- 'Working Towards a Child-Safe Newham New Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures'
- 'Working together: a guide to arrangements for inter-agency co-operation for the protection of children from abuse.' HMSO 1988-1991
- 'Support and Protection for children and young people in Newham Good Practice Guide' 2012.

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