



St. Stephen's School and Children's Centre

Learning for life

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy will be reviewed in 1 year.

	Date	By	Role	Ratified	Date
Version 1	December 2009	Neena Lall	Deputy head teacher		
Version 2	October 2010	Neena Lall	Deputy Head Teacher		
Version 3	November 2011	Neena Lall	Headteacher		

Governing bodies should review their child protection policies on an annual basis. If the policy has changed significantly since the last review then it should be presented to governors as an appendix to the Headteacher's report. Depending on previous decisions, this task can be delegated to a committee or an individual.

This policy was agreed by the Governing Body on _____

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This document has been drawn up in accordance with the London Child Protection Procedures 2007.

The governors and staff fully recognise the contribution the school makes, in partnership with other local agencies, to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and that everyone in the education service has an objective to keep children and young people safe.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. Through its emphasis on prevention and early intervention, this policy aims to minimise the risks of children being abused.

There are five aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Our policy and procedures provide for all of these aspects of safeguarding

Aims of the Child Protection Policy:

- Provide a safe environment for children and young people to learn.
- Support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Raise the awareness of all staff and volunteers of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Ensure that every member of staff including temporary, supply staff and volunteers including the Governing Body knows the name of the Designated Senior Person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure that there is a nominated governor for child protection.
- Identify children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and take appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in school.
- Provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.

- Emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- Develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Social Services and Local Authority and contribute to effective partnerships working between all those providing services for children.
- Ensure that safe recruitment practices are used and that Criminal Record Bureau checks are implemented.
- Ensure that all adults within our school who work with children have been checked as to their suitability.

Safer Recruitment

- All interview panels will have at least one person qualified in safer recruitment practices as set out by the NCSL training.
- The school will obtain an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure, which includes a Protection Of Children Act list/List 99 check, in respect of all people who work directly with children or who are likely to have unsupervised access to them.
- The school will allow only people who have undergone an enhanced CRB check to have unsupervised contact with children on the premises.
- The School will keep records to demonstrate to Ofsted that the checks have been done, including the number and date of issue of the enhanced CRB Disclosure.
- In addition all staff recruited will be required to provide two references, confirmation of ID and qualifications. Staff files will be regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with safer recruitment standards.
- The school must have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and others likely to have unsupervised access to the children (including those living or working on the premises) are suitable to do so.
- The School will also have regard to any requirements made under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 once these come into force with the intended introduction of a new vetting and barring scheme for those working with children and vulnerable adults from autumn 2008.

Responsibilities

The Designated Senior Person should

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- liaise with Head Teacher (where role not carried out by the Head Teacher) to inform her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

- Ensure that any pupil currently subject of a child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days or more is referred to CYPs and that the Education Welfare Service are informed.

Training

Training will be provided in order to ensure that

- All staff are able to recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral;
- Appropriate staff have a working knowledge of how Local Safeguarding Children Boards operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- All staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy especially new or part time staff who may work with different educational establishments;
- All staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise. (This is essential in respect of staff that are perhaps part time or work with more than one school. such as Connexions personal advisors, trainee teachers and supply teachers.);
- Appropriate staff are able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns;
- Staff have access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

Raising Awareness:

- ensure the establishments child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the governing body/proprietor regarding this;
- ensure parents see copies of the child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later;
- where children leave the establishment ensure their child protection file is copied for new establishment as soon as possible but transferred separately from main pupil file. (N.B. this can be done **electronically**). If a child leaves and the new school is not known, the DCSF should be alerted so that these children can be included on the database for lost pupils.

Supporting Children

- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

Our school will support all pupils by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- Notifying CYPs as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- The Head teacher or Designated Senior Person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- All staff will be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff will be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Supporting Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- All staff will have induction and then ongoing training and updates about child protection organised by the Designated Senior Person.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Senior Person and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations against staff

- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head teacher. If the allegation is against the Head teacher it should be passed immediately to the Chair of Governors.
- The Head teacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Area Designated Officer in the Children's Planning and Review Team.
- The school will follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) protocol for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is posted on the Newham LSCB website.

[\(http://www.newham.gov.uk/Services/NewhamLocalSafeguardingChildrenBoard/\)](http://www.newham.gov.uk/Services/NewhamLocalSafeguardingChildrenBoard/)

Whistleblowing

- Staff have the right to raise any child protection matter through the school's whistleblowing policy.

Physical Intervention/ Restraint

- There may be occasions where a member of staff has to use physical intervention/ restraint in order to prevent a pupil from harming themselves or others.
- Our policy on physical intervention/ restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- We understand that physical intervention which causes injury or distress to a child may need to be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

Bullying and Behaviour policy

These are set out in separate policies. It is acknowledged that if staff allow or condone bullying, such conduct may be considered under child protection procedures.

Discrimination on the grounds of race or religion

Our Equality policies are set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Maintain a Safe Environment

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHCE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- Similarly all staff and volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities and confident to deal with any concerns that may arise.
- Refer to the schools safeguarding statement

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Raising Child Protection Concerns

A child protection incident may arise in several ways.

1. A child may approach a member of staff and make a specific allegation e.g. "My mum hit me with a belt last night", or "I am hungry. Dad gets drunk all the time and we never have any food".
2. The child may say something in another context which may arouse suspicion e.g. while talking generally to a lunchtime supervisor, "I hate it when my dad gets drunk and hits my mum".
3. Staff may observe a general pattern being established over a period of time e.g. continued dirtiness and unkempt appearance, or a history of minor injuries, tearfulness and tummy aches.
4. A child may exhibit inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Responsibilities of Staff

Injuries

If a child comes to school with an injury the teacher should always ask how it happened. This should be done as a matter of course. Take time as soon as possible to do it in a quite, informal way, on a one to one basis in the normal classroom setting. Staff should always ask open ended questions e.g. "How did that happen?" as opposed to, "Who did that to you?" Avoid carrying out an interrogation, and do not ask a child to remove clothing to look at injuries. If the teacher is satisfied with the child's explanation and there are no grounds for concern, then no further action needs to be taken. However a note must be made and passed on to the Designated Senior Person. If the teacher is concerned about the answer or the child is already subject to a Child Protection Plan then the Designated Senior Person must be informed immediately (see below). If there is no other adult in the class then a teacher should send a note to the Child Protection Coordinator indicating that there is a child protection issue.

Disclosures by Children

If a child approaches a member of staff to make a disclosure then the person who has been approached should make it a priority.

- Find a quiet area to talk outside the classroom
- Listen to the child but do not pressurise the child for facts which they are unwilling to give
- Ascertain the facts. Ask questions of the What? When? Where? Who? type. Do not ask leading questions or suggest things to the child.

- Tell the child that you will need to tell other people what they said. Do not promise the child that you won't tell anyone else
- Do not ask the child to repeat what they have said to anyone else
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Inform the Designated Senior Person immediately.
- Make a written record of the disclosure.

A child may not approach a member of staff directly but may say something in another context which may arouse concern. In this situation the staff member should try to follow it up at the earliest opportunity by having a quiet word with the child. This should be very informal and care should be taken not to alarm the child. If the member of staff is still concerned then the Designated Senior Person should be informed at the earliest opportunity.

The Designated Senior Person

Every school has a Designated Senior Person for child protection. At St Stephen's School is Neena Lall this is the Head teacher. If they are not available then the Head teacher must be informed. Time is very important in child protection procedures. If an issue arises then it may be that social services may need to take the child to hospital for a medical examination, or social services may need to talk to the child or the parent before the child is allowed to go home in the afternoon. It is the responsibility of all staff to inform the Designated Senior Person immediately there is an issue. The Head teacher will give the issue priority.

The Head teacher will talk with the member of staff involved and agree a course of action. This will depend on the nature of the issue, any previous history, and what is known about the child and the family. The course of action could be an immediate referral to CYPS, a CAF assessment, it could be a talk with parents, or it could be a decision to monitor the situation. The latter may be appropriate where the member of staff begins to suspect that there are concerns involving neglect.

Record Keeping

All incidents of suspicion of child abuse must be recorded. The first priority is to inform the head teacher/deputy / learning mentor who will talk to the member of staff involved. After that the priority is to make a record of the incident. Head teacher will always ask the member of staff to give him/her a written report. If it involves a discussion with a child then the report should outline how the discussion arose, who instigated it, where the discussion took place, at what time it took place, and exactly what was said. It is important that this report is kept as factual as possible. This report should, as far as possible, be completed on the same day. If necessary this may mean a teacher missing part of an after school meeting, or a member of the support staff being excused from the classroom for some time.

If the teacher suspects that there are issues of neglect then the head teacher or learning mentor will ask the teacher to begin to keep regular observational records

All records relating to child protection issues will be kept separate from all other records and will be kept in the head teacher's office. Such records are confidential and will be shared with staff on a need to know basis.

At St Stephen's each class has a pupil well-being book that is kept in a secure and confidential place.

Teachers and EAS are to record any concerns regarding physical, emotional and social well-being as well as any incidents of ongoing unacceptable conduct, attendance and behavioural issues (including parents). The ECM coordinator, SENCO, learning mentor, children's centre family support worker and the DHT monitor these books half termly and then pick up on any concerns.

Children subject to a child protection plan

- The school needs to be aware of all children who are subject to a child protection plan.
- The Designated Senior Officer is responsible for ensuring that a school representative attends and provides a report for all child protection conferences
- The Designated Senior Officer should liaise with other agencies which support the pupil such as CYPS, Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- The Designated Senior Officer should ensure that where a pupil with a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to a new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed

Categories Of Child Abuse

Abuse is categorised under four headings: physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. There are many signs which may indicate that a child is being abused. For example, overt and inappropriate sexual behaviour may be a specific sign that the child is being exposed to sexual abuse. However, a withdrawn and unhappy looking child could possibly be suffering from any of the four categories of abuse, but it may not be obvious as to what is the cause of the unhappiness. Staff should always be aware of children who show:

- Uncharacteristic aggression or temper tantrums
- An inability to make friends or relate to other children of the same age group.
- Bursts of tearfulness
- Frequent complaints of tummy aches and headaches.
- An air of depression.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is where there is an injury to a child and there is either definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was not accidental. This suspicion may arise when the nature of the injury is not consistent with the explanation given by the child or the parent. Signs of physical abuse could include:

- Obvious major injuries such as fractures, black eyes, cuts, and burns.
- Frequent "minor" injuries such as bruising, swelling, and redness, which may be evident in P.E.
- A child walking stiffly or holding themselves in an awkward way which might indicate an injury hidden beneath their clothing
- An unwillingness to change for P.E.
- Flinching at sudden movements
- An air of watchfulness and fear

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It includes allowing the child to be exposed to dangerous situations. Signs of neglect could include:

- Constant hunger
- Thin or weak looking physique
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor personal hygiene and a dirty, unkempt appearance
- Lack of warm clothes in cold weather
- Constant tiredness
- A young child who comes to school and goes home unaccompanied
- A child who is left in the home without adult supervision
- A child who clings to adults and seeks affection

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent and severe emotional rejection or ill treatment of the child. It also includes situations where the child is witnessing domestic violence within the home. It is probably the most difficult type of abuse to recognise. The signs are behavioural rather than physical. Emotional abuse may often indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

Signs of emotional abuse could include:

- Withdrawal and an air of detachment
- Depression
- Poor self esteem and lack of confidence
- A loss of appetite

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the involvement of children in sexual activities which they do not comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent. Signs of sexual abuse could include:

- Child complaining of soreness / itching in the genital area
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Overt sexual behaviour or playing of a sexual nature
- Sexualised drawings
- Frequent soiling or wetting

APPENDIX 1

Situations where there should be a referral to Newham CAIT team

- 1. When it is suspected a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm either because disclosures or allegations have been made or from the presenting evidence. (Section 47)**
 - Physical abuse - when a parent or carer deliberately injures or induces illness in a child by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm.
 - Emotional abuse - when a child is persistently maltreated as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects to their emotional development. When you think a child is traumatised, injured or neglected as a result of domestic violence or persistent serious verbal threats.
 - Sexual abuse - forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities including both contact and non contact (pornographic, voyeuristic) abuse. When a girl under 13 is pregnant.
 - Neglect - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs which could cause significant harm to their health & development.
- 2. When there is a concern that a parent or carer poses a risk to children, including when someone has criminal convictions which suggest a risk to children or he/she poses a risk to a child of FGM, honour-based violence or forced marriage (Section 47)**
 - Children living in contact with adults with former schedule 1 offences or known to MAPPA /MARAC processes
 - Children/unborn babies of parents who have previously had children removed or with issues such as substance misuse, mental health problems or disabilities which could place children at risk of significant harm.
 - Children whose parents suffer from mental health problems where the child is the subject of parental delusions - even if the parent is not living with the child.

3. When a child is abandoned, home alone, lost or no-one has parental responsibility. (section 17 or 47)

- This includes vulnerable children left home alone and children whose parents are incapacitated through physical or mental ill health from caring for them.

4. When a child or young person is at risk of imminent family breakdown or breakdown has already occurred. (section 17 or 47)

- Children whose parents are experiencing a crisis or domestic violence dispute and are temporarily incapable of caring for them. When the parents' drug and alcohol misuse, learning difficulties, physical and/or mental health are preventing them from caring for their children.
- Young people who are in crisis with their parents and who require professional intervention to prevent family breakdown.

5. When a child has a disability, serious or terminal illness. (Section 17)

- Including where a child has been in hospital for 3 months or more
- Where a child may need a package of services to support living at home

6. When a child may be privately fostered. (Section 17)

- Children who are looked after by someone other than a parent, step-parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or sibling

7. When there is a suspicion that a child may be a 'child in need' which means they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development without the provision of services. (Section 17)

- Children of disabled parents entitled to carers assessment
- Children who are suspected of being trafficked

8. Young people remanded into Care because of criminal activity