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## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

### (part of our Safeguarding Children policies)

This document stands as a summary of our Child Protection (Safeguarding) Procedures.

#### **Statement of intent**

Following our registration as an OFSTED Early Years day-care provider, we have adopted the commitments and principles of the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA) regarding safeguarding children.

**We follow the guidelines in the PSLA publication *Child Protection Record* (see appendix 1).**

**The PSLA publication *Child Protection Record*, acts as our substantive Child Protection policy and procedures.**

This policy document is available to parents with all of our other policies on the school website.

The **PSLA publication *Child Protection Record*** (hard copy only) is available to parents on request.

Regarding our roles and responsibilities as an independent school, we follow the guidelines for independent schools (**see appendix 2**) as detailed on the website:

<http://www.isc.co.uk/index.php/915?PHPSESSID=d+>

Our school will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

These are the key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance policy for safeguarding children. Our school adheres to these commitments.

1. To build a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.
2. To respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in **'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'** (DoH 2004). (**see appendix 3**)
3. To promote awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering children, to promote their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

#### **Aims**

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our school that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.

- Promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

The legal framework for this policy is:

*Primary legislation*

The Children Act 1989 - s 47 (see PSLA Child Protection Record)

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

The Children (NI) Order

The Children (Scotland) Order

*Guidance*

The Framework for the Assessment of children in Need and Their Families (2000)

London Child Protection Procedures 2003 (in revision)

What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2004)

Safeguarding Children in Education (2004)

Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings (2005)

The Common Assessment Framework 2005

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)

Definitions and Thresholds for Managing Allegations against Education staff (2005)

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff (2005)

*Secondary Legislation*

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Human Rights Act (1999)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

## Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the guidelines outlined in the London Child Protection Procedures 2003 (in revision).
- We work in conjunction with the Social Services Team at Norwood. **(020 8457 4745)**
- We have a copy of **'What to do if you a worried a child is being abused'** (appendix 3) for parents (on request) and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, **(Referral and Assessment Team on 020 8359 4066, 0208 359 2000 if out of hours)** including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We work together with the Police Child Protection Team (020 8359 7739)
- We work together with the Education Welfare Team (020 8359 7684)
- Details of the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) contacts are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the local authority social services department, we act within the Local Safeguarding Children Board's guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

**See appendix 4 for a complete list of Child Protection School contacts.**

## Methods

### Key Commitment 1

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

## Safe Staffing and volunteering

- **Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is Sara Harris (Headteacher).**
- The areas of responsibility for the Designated Child Protection Officer are detailed in appendix 3 (page 36) of the DfES guidance Safeguarding Children in Education (2004).
- Our designated Child Protection governor who oversees this work is Suzanne Breuer-Weil.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- We include statements in our job advertisements and Person Specifications that we are committed to safeguarding children.
- All applications must be on an official staff application form. We do not accept CVs.
- We have some school staff and governors who have undergone and passed 'Safer Recruitment' training and are gradually increasing this number. There is always at least one person on a shortlist / interview panel who is 'Safer Recruitment' trained.

- We check identity and qualification documents when candidates come to interview.
- We check with the GTC that teachers are registered with them.
- We ask to see documents confirming a candidate's current address.
- Where necessary, we ask to see work permit documentation.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed.
- We obtain two references for candidates, before the post is offered. – we do not accept open references. All referees are sent the standard school reference request which must be completed and returned to the Headteacher. The Headteacher follows up any section of the reference that is incomplete or unclear.
- We may ask a candidate's permission to request a reference from a previous employer not cited on the application form as a referee.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and Criminal Record Bureau checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Since our setting opened in September 2006, all of our staff have an enhanced CRB check. We will not be having any staff working at our school without applying for them to have an enhanced CRB check.
- We keep each original CRB certificate in the staff individual files.
- We are registered with the Teachers' Pensions 'List 99' checking facility.
- We carry out 'List 99' checks for staff whose CRB certificate has not yet arrived.
- We keep a central Staff File Checklist for each staff member (see appendix 5) detailing the required checks according to the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2006 dfes letter to Headteachers regarding checking staff records.
- We ensure that our supply staff and agency staff (eg security, site maintenance and cleaning) also have an enhanced CRB check and we ask to see their CRB disclosure certificates.
- All regular volunteers must have an enhanced CRB check.
- We request 2 references for our volunteers.
- We carry out a 'List 99' check on 'one-off' volunteers eg parents/grandparents assisting with school outings.
- Regular volunteers must complete an occupational health questionnaire.
- We keep a 'Single Central Record' of all staff, volunteers, bank supply staff, regular agency staff and governors.
- We ask all candidates at interview if they have had a criminal conviction or if they are currently undergoing any criminal investigation.
- We ask all candidates at interview if they have ever had a child of their own on the Child Protection Register or a child of their own removed from their care.

- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

## Key Commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2004.)

## Method

### Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.  
**See the following appendices:**
  - **appendix 6: Recognising children at risk of abuse or neglect**
  - **appendix 7: Child Abuse – signs and symptoms – Kidscape publication**
- When a member of staff has concerns about a child's welfare, the staff member makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the named Child Protection Officer. The information is stored in a confidential pupil Child Protection file.
- The procedure we take following the initial note of concern is detailed on appendix 8; **Flow Chart for Dealing with Child Welfare Concerns.**
- Staff in our school take care not to influence the outcome of any possible investigation either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- **At all times, our policy and procedures regarding the management of any concerns regarding safeguarding children and child protection, are those set out in the document 'What to do if you're worried a Child is being abused.'** (see attached appendix 3).

### Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteers within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the London Child Protection Procedures and Barnet Local Authority when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child. This includes following the procedures as outlined in the **Allegations Flowchart** in appendix 4 (page 38) of the DfES guidance **Safeguarding Children in Education** (2004).

- Any allegations that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child are referred straight to the Headteacher. (If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the referral is made to the Chair of Governors).
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident. These details are: the nature of the allegation; when it took place; whether there were any witnesses and whether there was any injury incurred.
- The Headteacher refers any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department Lead Officer (020 8359 7739) to investigate. (Should the allegation of abuse be against the Headteacher, it is the Chair of Governors who makes the referral to the LA lead officer.)
- This will be followed immediately by a strategy meeting which will include the LA lead officer, a representative from the Police Child Protection Team and the chair (or a named deputy) of the personnel committee.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- We take advice from the LA lead officer regarding the issues of whether to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

### **Disciplinary action**

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the school or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

### **Key Commitment 3**

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

### **Method**

#### **Training**

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- The designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection receives training in inter-agency procedures in order to gain the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their responsibilities. This should be refreshed at 2 yearly intervals.

- All staff and governors receive training when they are first appointed and this should be refreshed at 3 yearly intervals. They are also given a written statement about the school's policy and procedures, and the name and contact details of the designated person.
- The responsibilities of the designated staff member include training other staff and governors.
- We keep records of staff Child Protection training.
- Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- We use various agencies for training including the Local Authority and the AJE (Agency for Jewish Education).

### **Curriculum**

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within our school a culture of value and respect for each child, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.
- We have an anti-bullying policy.

### **Disclosures**

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child in order not to compromise any possible future investigation. Our staff are aware that it is not their responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse and that they should not take any action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name;
- the child's address;
- the age of the child;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;

- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- the names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in the confidential pupil child protection file.

**(The Pre-school Learning Alliance's publication 'Child Protection Record,' appendix 1 contains detailed procedures for this as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.)**

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

### **Informing parents**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

### **Confidentiality**

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- All records pertaining to pupil child protection are kept locked in a cupboard only accessible to the Designated Child Protection Officer and the Headteacher.

### **Support to families**

- Our school believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- As much as possible, we involve the services of Norwood in all areas of family support.
- We make it clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of children, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- We continue to welcome children and their families whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the social services department in relation to our designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- The governing body will ensure that the school has a senior member of staff designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues. Governors will regularly monitor and review any incidents detailed in the incident book, while a named governor participates in the school's training with regard to child protection procedures.
- We evaluate the effectiveness of our Child Protection policy and procedures using the Hertfordshire School Child Protection Self Evaluation checklist (**see appendix 9**).
- This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

**Sara Keen (Headteacher)**

**Signed: *Sara J. Keen* (Headteacher) *Eddy Brener-Weil* (Chair of Governors)**

**Date: October 2010**