



# Heathside Preparatory School

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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**Heathside Preparatory School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.**

Our policy applies to all staff and club leaders working in the school. There are five main elements in our policy.

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. Please refer to the Safe Recruitment section in our main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Recognition: development and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Response: supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan. This includes responding appropriately to disclosure and referring cases to Camden Safeguarding and Social Care where appropriate.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. Please refer to our main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Staff will refer to the Child Protection Definitions and Indicators provided by Camden Children Schools and Families for a full definition of harm and specific indicators that a child maybe at risk (Appendix A).

### Procedure

We will follow the procedures set out by the Area Child Protection Committee or Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection. (It is Melissa Remus Elliot.)
- Ensure we have a designated deputy teacher for child protection (Sarah Fortna).
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate training on Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and take responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure all members of staff understand and can recognise symptoms of physical, emotional (including neglect), and sexual abuse. Staff will refer to the Child Protection Definitions and Indicators provided by

Camden Children Schools and Families (Appendix A).

- Notify Safeguarding and Social Care (SSC) if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and confident, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or club teacher. Refer to Allegation procedure.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed. Refer to overall Safeguarding Policy.

### Dealing with disclosures

In accordance with the Camden Children, Schools and Families guidance, if a pupil discloses to a member of staff that they are being abused, the member of staff will to the best of their ability:

- Listen to what is said without displaying shock or disbelief and accept what the child is saying, allowing the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child but not make promises that it may not be possible to keep, or promise confidentiality, as a referral may have to be made to Safeguarding and Social Care.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and that they were right to tell someone.
- Explain what will happen next.
- Make a formal record, by filling out an Incident Form and pass this on to a designated child protection teacher.

### Referral

- The decision to refer a pupil to Camden Safeguarding and Social Care (SSC) will be made by the designated child protection teacher or their deputy following a discussion with the member of staff who has raised concerns. Where there is any doubt, the designated teacher will discuss the case on a 'no names' basis with Camden's child protection lead officer or other senior practitioner.
- A Common Assessment Framework Assessment (CAF) will be completed for every referral either by the teacher raising concerns or by the designated teacher.
- Parental consent will be sought prior to the referral unless to seek consent would place the child at risk of further harm.
- Referrals will be made to the allocated SSC social worker if the child has one. If the child is not already known to SSC, the referral will be made to the relevant duty and assessment team, depending on the child's address.
- Referrals will be confirmed in writing using the E-CAF.

### Monitoring

Where a pupil is the subject of a child protection plan and the school has been asked to monitor their attendance and welfare:

- Monitoring will be carried out by the relevant staff member in conjunction with the designated teacher.
- Information will be recorded on the child protection incident form.
- The completed incident form will be kept on the pupil's file and copied made available to conferences and core group meetings.

### Records

- Child protection records are kept in a designated file separate to the pupil's education records.
- The designated teacher will ensure that records will contain:
- Basic information sheet.
- Up-to-date Child Protection Incident Form, on which all incidents, disclosures and signs of neglect are

recorded, with dates, times and location.

- Child protection records will be disposed of as confidential waste when the pupil leaves the school.
- Copies of all relevant records will be passed on to the designated child protection teacher at the new school.
- A central record of child protection and welfare concerns will be kept.

### Confidentiality

- Before information is shared, consent will be sought from parents, unless this is likely to cause further harm.
- Relevant information will be shared with SSC.

### Supporting the child at school

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as SSC, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

## Appendix A

### CHILD PROTECTION; DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS

Issued by Camden Children, Schools and Families

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**Neglect:** failure to provide basic care to meet the child's physical needs, such as not providing adequate food, clothing or shelter; failure to protect the child from harm or ensure access to medical care and treatment.

**Physical abuse:** causing physical harm or injury to a child.

**Sexual abuse:** involving children in sexual activity, or forcing them to witness sexual activity, which includes involving children in looking at the production of pornography.

**Emotional abuse:** failure to provide love and warmth that affects the child's emotional development; psychological ill treatment of a child through bullying, intimidation or threats.

### Possible indicators of abuse and neglect

#### Neglect

- Inadequate or inappropriate clothing
- Appears underweight and unwell and seems constantly hungry
- Failure to thrive physically and appears tired and listless
- Dirty or unhygienic appearance
- Frequent unexplained absences from school
- Lack of parental supervision

**Physical abuse**

- Any injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns or fractures where the explanation given is inconsistent with the injury
- Injuries in unexpected places that are not typical of normal childhood injuries or accidents
- High frequency of injuries
- Parents seem unconcerned or fail to seek adequate medical treatment

**Sexual abuse**

- Sexual knowledge or behaviour that is unusually explicit or inappropriate for the child's age/stage of development
- Sexual risk taking behaviour including involvement in sexual exploitation/older boyfriend
- Continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to genital or anal area or bruising, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy
- Unwillingness to undress for sports

**Emotional abuse**

- Development delay
- Attachment difficulties with parents and others
- Withdrawal and low self-esteem

**Indirect indicators of abuse and neglect**

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Withdrawal and low self-esteem
- Eating disorders
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Sudden unexplained absences from school
- Drug/alcohol misuse
- Running away/ going missing

**Parental attributes**

- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Physical/mental health or learning difficulties
- Domestic violence
- Avoiding contact with school and other professionals

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