



South Ascot Village School

Child Protection Policy

(To be read in conjunction with our policies on Health, Safety and Welfare and Safeguarding.)

1 Introduction

1.1 The health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection from harm, harassment or abuse, regardless of their age, gender, ability, race or social background. They have a right to be safe at all times, both in school and in their lives outside school.

1.2 Child abuse takes a variety of forms:

- physical abuse involves the hitting, shaking or other physical treatment of a child that may cause actual bodily harm or be psychologically distressing;
- sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening; this includes non-contact situations, such as showing children pornography or encouraging inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- emotional abuse is the persistent psychological ill-treatment of children, such as persistent bullying, frightening, threatening or otherwise intimidating them; emotional abuse can also consist in degrading children or making them feel worthless, uncared for or unloved;
- children are also abused if they are neglected; this might involve failure to provide proper food, warmth and daily care, but it might also be failure to support the emotional well-being of the child.

1.3 Children have a basic right to live their lives free from abuse. Furthermore, children suffering any kind of abuse will be unable to learn effectively and will not achieve their full potential.

1.4 Children can develop a special and close relationship with school staff, and come to view them as significant and trustworthy adults. Children may therefore, if they have been abused, confide or disclose to a teacher or other member of staff. Sometimes school staff are also in a unique position to notice any significant change in behaviour or circumstances. There are opportunities in school to notice injuries, marks or bruises, for example, when children are doing PE, games or swimming, which might indicate a child has been abused.

1.5 This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. It reflects current legislation, accepted best practice and complies with government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015 updated feb 2017) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016) Children Act (1998/2004) Statutory Framework for Early Years foundation Stage (April 2017) What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Our aims, in relation to child protection are:

- to provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- to respect our children and to encourage them all to have high self-esteem so that they can achieve to the best of their ability;
- to strive to ensure that all our children are enabled to make good educational progress;
- to provide opportunities which enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves;
- through our teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, to help children develop appropriate attitudes towards others and to come to understand normal, appropriate expectations of social behaviour; we also aim to teach them how to recognise different types of risks in a range of situations, and how to behave in response to them;
- to establish what actions the school can take to ensure that children remain safe, at home as well as at school;
- to raise the awareness of all staff to child protection issues, and to define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- to identify children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm;
- to ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues;
- to ensure that parents and carers are aware of the school's policy on Child Protection and related matters.

3 Staff responsibilities

3.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure all of the following:

- that the governing body adopts appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard children in the school;
- that all staff are sufficiently trained in child protection to enable them to be fully aware of all relevant issues and actions which they should take if they suspect abuse;
- that this policy and related practices are implemented by all staff;
- that sufficient resources and time are allocated for staff to carry out their responsibilities effectively;
- that all staff and adult helpers in the school are able to voice their concern if they feel that a child is vulnerable or may be suffering abuse, or that there are any particular school practices which may put children at risk.

3.2 There is a named person designated as the child protection coordinator is Kate Rimell the Acting Headteacher, but she may delegate this responsibility in some circumstances to her Acting Deputy Head Carey Kelly. The coordinator is guided by two principles:

- in accordance with the Children Act, the welfare of the child is always paramount;
- confidentiality should be respected whenever possible.

A key role of the coordinator is to be fully conversant with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and to ensure that the school takes action to support any child who may be at risk. The coordinator must also make sure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection. The coordinator will work closely with Social Services, as well as the LSCB, when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved will handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, always remembering that the interests of the child are of paramount importance.

- 3.3 **If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.**
- 3.5 Staff should be aware of new reporting requirements with regards to known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM).
- 3.6 Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.
- 3.7 The governing body also has a named governor with responsibility for overseeing child protection issues, who participates in all child protection training. This is Nikki Gardiner
- 3.8 All staff have a responsibility to report to the headteacher or child protection coordinator any concern they have about the safety of any child in their care.

4 Employment and recruitment

- 4.1 We will do all we can to ensure that all those working with children in our school are suitable people. This involves scrutinising applicants, verifying their identity and qualifications, and obtaining references, as well as the mandatory check of List 99 and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. We follow the government guidance set out in *Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service (2002)*, and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)*
- 4.2 We ensure that at least one member of every staff recruitment panel, whether members of staff or the governing body, has received recent Safer Recruitment Training. Kate Rimell, Helen Thomson, Nikki Gardiner, Tony Bryant.

5 Procedure to be followed if an adult has concerns about a child

- 5.1 Any action taken by the named child protection coordinator when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Local Authority's (LA) Child Protection Guidelines.
- 5.2 All adults in our school share responsibility for keeping our children safe. We may on occasion report concerns which, on investigation, prove unfounded.
- 5.3 If teachers suspect that a child in their class may be a victim of abuse, they should not try to investigate, but should immediately inform the child protection coordinator about their concerns. Abuse can be of a physical, sexual or emotional nature. It can also be the result of neglect. Staff must not keep to themselves any information about abuse which a child gives them; they are required by law to pass this information on.
- 5.4 If a child alleges abuse, the school will usually contact the LA without first informing parents and carers. However, in some circumstances, following advice from the LA, parents and carers may be informed first.
- 5.5 If a referral is made, a case conference will be held within eight working days. Case conferences offer the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action. Relevant staff are expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings held.

6 Allegations against staff

- 6.1 If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of the school staff (or a volunteer helper), it will always be investigated by the headteacher, or, in the case of the allegation being against the headteacher, by the chair of the governing body. If it is felt, after these

initial investigations, that a further enquiry is needed, then the member of staff will be suspended. Suspension is a neutral act, and in no way implies that the person is guilty of any wrong-doing. However, it is acknowledged that this would be distressing for the person concerned, and the school will do all it can to balance the interests of any individual with that of the need to keep children safe. The school will seek advice from the LA on these matters, and comply with national and locally agreed guidance.

7 Staff training

- 7.1 All adults in the school receive regular training to raise their awareness of child protection and abuse, and to improve their knowledge of the child protection procedures that have been agreed locally. The maximum period of time before refresher training must take place is three years.

8 Confidentiality

- 8.1 We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat it accordingly. We pass information on to appropriate persons only.
- 8.2 We comply with the requirements of the government and the LA, with regard to confidentiality. The files we keep on children are available on request to those children's parents or carers. Information from third parties will not be disclosed without their prior consent. Access to these files may be withheld in certain prescribed cases where there are instances of actual or alleged abuse. Working notes are not subject to disclosure, but will be summarised and then kept on file. These guidelines are in line with the safeguards on disclosure of information set out in the *Education (School Records) Regulations 1989* and subsequent guidance.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 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, and a named link governor. Governors will regularly monitor and review the implementation of this policy, through confidential reporting from the headteacher.
- 9.2 This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

Signed: K J Rimell

Date: April 2017