



Reviewed October 2011

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

At Abbey Wood Nursery School and Children's Centre we aim to provide a happy, secure environment where pupils, parents, carers and staff feel welcomed and valued. We expect adults and children to show respect and concern for each other. We expect parents and carers to take responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children. All staff have a duty to protect children who are considered "at risk of significant harm".

(The Children Act 1989)

Under the Children Act 1989 school staff have a responsibility for identifying, referring and supporting children at risk of abuse or neglect. We are committed to co-operating with other agencies, including social services, in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

(Associated documents:

London Child Protection Procedures

EYFS Welfare guidance

Working Together for the Protection of Children)

The role of the School/Centre in Safeguarding is governed by information contained in Ofsted guidance September 2011.

Any allegations of serious harm against or abuse of a child by any person looking after children at the premises (whether the allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) or by the registered person will be reported to Ofsted.

The role of the designated teacher for Safeguarding

There is a designated teacher for Safeguarding Children within the school.

This person is Clare Barber the headteacher.

Please note that in her absence it will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team as below:

Deputy Head - Gill Crowley

Children's Centre Services Manager - Tracey North
Assistant Head - Carole James

The designated teacher has the following responsibilities:

In the Centre

- * To work with parents and carers for the protection of children
- * To ensure that centre staff are aware of procedures
- * To be available for discussion with staff on suspected abuse
- * To make a decision on referral
- * To maintain a system for record keeping and collation of information
- * To manage the centre's role in the safeguarding plan
- * To contact parent and carers when necessary

Liaison with other agencies

- * To discuss concerns with Social Care
- * To refer concerns and provide information
- * To promote good working relationships with other agencies
- * To attend safeguarding conferences

To have knowledge of:

- * Signs and symptoms of child abuse
- * The referral procedure
- * Roles and responsibilities of other agencies
- * Requirements of record keeping
- * The conduct of case conferences

Identification and support of children who may have suffered abuse

All staff share a responsibility for recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse (see appendix 1). It is essential that any safeguarding concerns are shared with the designated teacher immediately. Such concerns should be recorded by the reporting member of staff and handed to the designated teacher for action and filing. All such records should be kept in a secure place.

Staff need to be sensitive to the needs of children when concerns are raised.

Whilst the designated teacher is responsible for referring concerns to Social Care, any member of staff who considers such a referral

appropriate should assume this responsibility if not carried out by the designated teacher.

The referral process

Any concerns relating to the safety and well-being of children should be referred to the designated teacher straight away. The protection of children relies on good communication and it is important that any concerns, however apparently trivial, are discussed.

Whenever possible, concerns will first be discussed with parents and carers. If the explanation given is judged to be plausible by the designated teacher, a note of the incident and enquiry will be kept on the child's file. No further action will be taken.

If the designated teacher does not consider the explanation to be plausible or feels they may indicate child abuse, based on her knowledge and experience, she has a duty to immediately refer the incident to Social Care. After a telephone referral, the Safeguarding Referral Form should be completed (kept in the office filing cabinet).

The exception is any incident which involves possible sexual abuse. Such incidents must be referred straight to Social Care for advice and not discussed at all with parents and carers. This is to avoid alerting possible perpetrators that concerns have been raised.

Record keeping

A record of all safeguarding concerns should be kept in a secure place. The member of staff reporting the concern is responsible for completing this record on the same day. All records should be dated and signed. The Centre has a pro- forma for recording concerns.

Records relating to child abuse are exempt from the requirements of disclosure under the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989.

Courts may require schools to provide school protection records in alleged cases of abuse which come to court. Class registers may also be called for. These documents need to be kept for eight years.

Involvement of staff during investigation and after

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies.

If a child confides in a member of staff and asks for secrecy it is important that a child is told sensitively of the duty to refer. Children should be assured that the matter will be treated confidentially and only shared with those who need to know.

Staff should be sensitive to the needs of the child. Children should be afforded opportunities to talk to any chosen member of staff but should not be questioned unnecessarily.

Information which is received on children and families should only be shared within appropriate professional contexts. Staff should never discuss their concerns in the presence of students, parents or children.

Safeguarding records are kept in a secure, locked location.

The class teacher may be asked to provide a report for the safeguarding conference (see appendix 2). Any member of staff could also be required to attend court.

Staff will provide support to the child and family as part of the protection plan.

Sharing of Information

Information regarding the safety and care of the children within the Centre will be shared with members of staff "on a need to know" basis.

This can take place at staff meetings, SEN meetings or at a specially called meeting.

This will ensure that information is transferred from
The Children's Centre to Sunshine Room
The Children's Centre to Main School
Sunshine Room to Main School
Main School to Sky Room(Extended Day)

Procedures for allegations against staff

If an allegation or complaint is made against a member of staff, the headteacher and **designated lead practitioner for Safeguarding - Clare**

Barber must be informed immediately. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, the **Deputy Headteacher** must be informed.

Ofsted should be informed of any allegation concerns made against a member of staff, as soon as it is reasonable or practicable, but at least within 14 days of the allegation being made.

Failure to comply with this requirement is an offence.

There should then be an initial information gathering stage in preparation for deciding the most appropriate action. After information is gathered it may become clear that no further action is necessary. In this case it should be clearly documented and a clear explanation given to the parent/carer.

If the decision is taken to refer the allegation to Children's Services the centre would follow Greenwich Authority procedures.

If an allegation is made against an agency member of staff a senior manager at the agency must be informed.

If an allegation is made against a student or volunteer the senior lecturer/headteacher must be informed.

The Centre staff should not undertake it's own investigation as this may compromise the Children's Services investigation.

In no circumstances should a staff member or volunteer be "let go" or encouraged to resign. If the staff member does resign this should not stop the investigation process. A proper and full investigation should be conducted in all cases.

Ofsted may visit the Centre to discuss the implications of the investigations once completed. The Centre's disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedure may then be initiated.

In such circumstances the Centre would follow Greenwich Authority procedures.

Staff training programme in child abuse

All classroom staff will receive appropriate and regular training in identification and support of children who may have suffered abuse. The centre has a rolling programme of safeguarding training. All members of the school staff will be aware of the SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT which is on the noticeboard in the staff room. This states that:

" All staff at Abbey Wood Nursery School and Children's Centre have the general duty to promote children's safety and welfare and to seek to protect them from actual or potential harm".

The school's referral procedure is also outlined.

The designated teacher will receive training to enable her to meet the responsibilities of that post.

The nominated governors for Child Protection, Looked after Children & Safeguarding is Councillor Mardner. There is a safeguarding aspect to every governors meeting and regular reports are presented to the governors.

Governors will also receive information and training about the school's responsibilities related to safeguarding

Parental involvement in the safeguarding process

Parents and carers are responsible for the safety and well-being of their children. If they are concerned about their children it is important that they talk to a member of staff. Misunderstandings can be avoided by informing the staff if their child has received an injury or an upsetting experience. The Centre Handbook explains that every member of staff has a responsibility for the safety and welfare of the children who attend the Centre.

Record of Concern forms are completed by staff and given to the designated teacher to act upon.

The staff are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. A copy of this policy is available in the main school office.

The statement with regard to 'Safeguarding Children' is displayed in all areas of the centre. Parents are informed in the 'Home Centre Agreement' the procedures for Safeguarding in the centre, and that a copy of the policy is available from the office.

Safeguarding in the curriculum

Issues relating to the safety and well-being of children are included within the planned curriculum, when appropriate. Activities which support the development of children's self esteem, enable them to feel good about themselves and to make independent decisions relating to their own actions are provided. Staff also discuss issues related to safety and protection as they arise in conversation with children.

Information disclosed to visitors

The designated teacher will discuss the Centre's Safeguarding Children Policy with the visitor and ensure a written copy is available if required. Information will be disclosed if appropriate. Issues of confidentiality will be emphasised.

Whistle blowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitudes, behaviour or actions of colleagues. [see LA Whistleblowing Policy]

Physical Intervention

The procedures on physical intervention is stated in our Professional Code of Conduct and acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort and that only minimal force should be used to prevent injury to another person.

We recognise that physical intervention of a nature which may cause injury or distress to a child may be considered under safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

Bullying

We do not condone bullying and acknowledge that any issues related to this area may be considered under child safeguarding procedures.

Racist incidents

Our policy on racist incidents acknowledges that any incidents will not be tolerated and can lead to consideration under child safeguarding procedures.

Contacting Social Care

IRAS team 0208 921 3172

Associated Documents

Professional code of conduct
Home /Centre Agreement

Child Protection/Safeguarding Statement
Ofsted Guidance on safeguarding children 2011
Whistleblowing policy
Centre Handbook for Parents
Staff/student/volunteer induction pack.