

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN EDUCATION: A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR KING ALFRED SCHOOL



INTRODUCTION

King Alfred School fully recognises the responsibility it has under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at the school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the appropriate agency, normally the appropriate Child and Family Team (Social Services).

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. It complies with the requirements of the London and Barnet Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos, raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

SUPPORT TO PUPILS who may have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN through ensuring we practice safe recruitment by using appropriate selection and checking procedures to determine the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school including teaching and support staff, parents and Council Members. Teaching assistants and support staff, as well as teachers, can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact Council Members (school governors).

1 PREVENTION

- 1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.
- 1.2 The school will therefore:
 - 1.2.1 establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. Our teachers are encouraged to establish personal rapport with pupils and parents and instil a feeling of trust and support;
 - 1.2.2 ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty, for example, we have trained counsellors on site who can be accessed easily;
 - 1.2.3 ensure notices with up to date contact numbers of support agencies, such as 'NSPCC', are placed in accessible places around the school;
 - 1.2.4 include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.
 - 1.2.5 include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and information about who to turn for help. PHSE is also delivered at various times via Circle Time, Form Hour and Camps. Flexibility within the timetable also allows for one off sessions to target specific needs;
 - 1.2.6 pupils are encouraged to develop their 'voice' through Year 6 buddying Year 3, Pupil's Council, 6th form students assigned to younger classes and older students are trained in counselling skills, this provides further access to support;

1.2.7 the PHSE programme throughout Lower School reinforces essential skills for every child. Self esteem and confidence building, thinking independently and making assessments of risk based on their own judgements are encouraged throughout the course.

1.2.8 the Child Protection Policy will work in conjunction with the school's positive behaviour policy;

2 PROCEDURES

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Guidance March 2010, the London Child Protection Committee, "London Child Protection Procedures, Edition Four, 2011" (www.londonscb.gov.uk) and the Guidance issued, 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, January 2007' (which came into force in Independent Schools in May 2007). There is a separate document detailing guidelines for staff (Child Protection Procedure – Guidelines for Staff.

2.2 The Designated Team of Staff for Child Protection

The Head will be the Lead Person taking responsibility for child protection in the school. The Head is also the designated person with responsibility for EYFS (Early Years' Foundation Stage, i.e. children aged under 5 years). Immediate EYFS support is provided by a trained member of staff at Ivy Wood. In addition, the school will:

2.2.1 ensure it has at least two designated senior members of staff, who have received appropriate training in child protection and inter-agency working;

2.2.2 ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance;

2.2.3 recognise the importance of the role of the designated staff and ensure that they have the time and training to undertake their duties;

2.2.4 ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated members of staff not be available;

- 2.2.5 ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases.
- 2.2.6 hold regular meetings of the designated Child Protection Team (at least twice a term).
- 2.2.7 ensure the team is chaired effectively by a designated person other than the Head. The Head will support the work of the team and take final responsibility for any referrals made to outside agencies.
- 2.2.8 provide training in child protection (updated at least every three years) for all staff, ensuring that temporary and part time staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements and their responsibilities

2.3 **The Role of the School**

The school will:

- 2.3.1 ensure every member of staff and every Council (Governing Body) member knows:
 - the names of the staff in the designated team and their role;
 - the name of the nominated Council member responsible for child protection;
 - that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the guidance used;
 - that the book containing London Child Protection Procedures is located in the Head's Office;
- 2.3.2 provide training for all staff (teaching and non-teaching whether full time, part-time or voluntary) from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:
 - their personal responsibility,
 - the child protection procedures,
 - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
 - how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse

- 2.3.3 ensure that every member of staff receives guidance from the point of induction, updated annual guidance (via the Staff Guidelines document) and bi-annual specific training in how to work within the KAS ethos and yet be sure to forestall any possible allegations of abuse.
- 2.3.4 ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed collegiate responsibilities procedures.
- 2.3.5 remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements.

2.4 **Liaison with Other Agencies**

The school will:

- 2.4.1 work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences;
- 2.4.2 notify the relevant Children and Family Services team if:
- it should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register (whether fixed term or permanently);
 - there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend); or as agreed as part of any child protection or core group plan.

2.5 **Record Keeping**

The school will:

- 2.5.1 keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children and Family Services immediately;

2.5.2 ensure all records are kept secure, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations;

2.5.3 ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools.

2.6 Confidentiality and information sharing

2.6.1 Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the Headteacher or outside agency as required.

2.6.2 The Headteacher or a designated team member will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

2.6.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that in making decisions about what to share the needs of the child are considered as paramount.

2.6.4 In a situation where a child may be disclosing personal information that may pose a danger to the child or to others, the member of staff must not promise the child unconditional confidentiality.

2.7 Communication with Parents

The school will:

2.7.1 undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this. (Further guidance on this can be found in the London Child Protection Procedures section 4.4.9)

2.7.2 ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school's terms and conditions.

2.7.3 make this policy available to parents on request and publish it on the website

3 SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK

- 3.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.
- 3.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 3.3 We recognise that some children adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.
- 3.4 The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:
 - 3.4.1 the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see section 2);
 - 3.4.2 the school ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2);
 - 3.4.3 the school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on addressing the behavioural element of any misdemeanours in a way which does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
 - 3.4.4 liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Children and Family Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service;
 - 3.4.5 a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so;
 - 3.4.6 recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;

3.4.7 vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Children and Family Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

3.5 When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Review Manager will also be informed.

3.6 **Drug Use and Child Protection**

3.6.1 The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings, but the school will consider such action when there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- to believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- to suspect that the misuse has been prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.
- to believe a pupil may be affecting the welfare of other pupils by supplying them with either illegal substances or substances which may cause intoxication

3.6.2 **Children of Drug Using Parents**

3.6.3 Further enquiries and or further action will be taken when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in any of the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection);
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment exists which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

3.6.4 The school has a duty of care to not release children to the adults collecting them in the event we believe the adult to be incapacitated as a result of drug or alcohol use.

4 PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- 4.1 The school will operate safe recruitment practices. This will include following ISA requirements in checking that applicants are registered with the authority and obtaining references and CRB disclosures as appropriate. At least two members of staff are also trained to the level required by the DCSF in their guidelines, 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, January 2007'.
- 4.2 The school will consult with the designated Local Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the school's documentation. If an allegation is made against the Head the Chair of Council will be informed and will be responsible for consulting with the LADO and applying the relevant procedures set out in the school's documentation.
- 4.3 The school will ensure that any matters pertaining to allegations of abuse against children will be subject to disciplinary proceedings and will be concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- 4.4. The school will comply with the statutory requirement to advise the ISA of any person whom it believes to have met the authority's criteria for referral. It will also refer any appropriate cases to relevant professional bodies.
- 4.5 The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents as advised by the school's staff guidelines.
- 4.6 The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the

Sexual Offences Act 2003 (abuse of position of trust) and also that under their duty of care, sexual relationships with pupils aged 18 or over would constitute gross misconduct as laid out within the school's disciplinary procedures.

5 OTHER RELATED POLICIES

5.1 Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in the special needs document. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury themselves, another person or property

5.2 Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the governing body. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

5.3 Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly by the governing body. We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

5.4 Health and Safety

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body. It 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.

5.5 Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and or emotional

and behavioural problems are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

6 COUNCIL (GOVERNING BODY) CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Council fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues;
- receive an annual report on child protection matters to include changes affecting Child Protection policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (anonymously) and child protection in the curriculum;
- carry out an annual review of the school's policies and procedures to safeguard children and how effectively the related duties have been discharged.

6.2 Before and After School Activities

6.2.1. If the school provides extended school facilities or before or after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

6.2.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body the school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

Appendix A

Standards For Effective Child Protection Practice In Schools

Child protection matters are receiving an increased priority in Ofsted and ISI inspections. The following standards may assist schools in evaluating their practice

In best practice, schools:

- 1 have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- 2 provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
- 3 work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
- 4 are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
- 5 monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, *in a secure place*, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
- 6 provide and support child protection training regularly to school staff working with children every three years and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose;
- 7 contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;

- 8 use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account of the guidance for Governors on sex and relationship education in circular 5/94;
- 9 provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the schools approach to bullying;
- 10 have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the schools position on this issue and who they can contact for support;
- 11 take particular care that pupils with SEN in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills;
- 12 have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set down in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education";
- 13 have a written whole school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by schools staff and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards;
- 14 the school will ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LA for monitoring purposes.