

## Seven Mills School

### Policy on Child Protection and Safeguarding: September 2016

#### I Introduction

1.1 At Seven Mills the health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.

1.2 This policy acknowledges that child abuse takes a variety of forms:

- Physical abuse involves the hitting, shaking or other treatment of a child that can cause actual bodily harm.
- 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.
- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of children, such as frightening them, or putting them in positions of danger. It is also an abuse to convey to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.
- Children are abused also if they are neglected. This could involve failure to provide proper food and warmth, but it might also be failure to see to the emotional well-being of the child.

According to the latest guidance on safeguarding in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016) there are a number of additional areas that staff should have an awareness of in relation to keeping children safe. Some of these are given below with brief guidance. For more detailed guidance please refer to the above document. **The guidance also clearly states that:**

**'All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another'. Staff should also be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.**

- **Children at risk of Extremism or Radicalisation**

An updated Ofsted Inspection Framework published in January 2013 sets out expectations on preventing extremism. It directs inspectors to examine a school's response to extremist behaviour when considering the behaviour and safety of pupils, as well as the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school in preventing extremism. It is expected that the Government will strengthen these provisions in the near future.

Since 2012, it has been required by law that teachers should not "undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs"

Exposing children to extremist ideology can hinder their social development and educational attainment alongside posing a very real risk that they could support or partake in an act of violence. Radicalisation of young people can be compared to grooming for sexual exploitation.

“Safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm”. Home Office –The Prevent Strategy.

Training on recognising and responding to the risk of Violent Extremism and the role of professionals is available for school staff and other professionals from the Prevent Project Manager, Nojmul Hussain, tel: 020 7364 4691 or from the Support for Learning Service (contact Liz Vickerie on 0207 364 6448).

On Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016 school staff received Prevent Training from the Local Authority Prevent Lead, Tom Llewellyn-Jones.

- **Internet Security**

Generally what is good practice for safeguarding in other fields is good practice for safeguarding against extremism. Two main factors impact upon online safeguarding – these are user behaviour and network security.

Seven Mills enforces an Acceptable Use Policy, which includes provisions such as preventing access to private email on the network, ensuring web connected computers are in public areas, and monitoring browsing history. There is also, as always, a need to ensure that everyone knows what to do should they become concerned about something they find, or contact they receive, online.

The school has a robust filtering system in place, both at school and service provider level. The school uses the London Grid for Learning and more information on this system is available under the Support tab on their website [www.lgfl.net](http://www.lgfl.net).

- **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Some children are at risk of being exploited sexually by a range of adults who appear to care for them. Staff should report any concerns where a child has new possessions or unexplained gifts, has mood swings or changes in emotional well being or displays inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

- **Peer on Peer Abuse**

All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves vis peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

- **Child trafficking and exploitation**

It can be difficult to detect signs of trafficking, especially if the victim of trafficking has been coerced into concealing the true nature of their situation. However, staff may notice signs of neglect, poorly explained absences or inconsistency in terms of adults responsible for the child.

- **Enforced Marriages**

No faith supports the idea of forcing someone to marry without their consent. This should not be confused with arranged marriages between consenting adults.

- **Under-age Marriages**

In England, a young person cannot legally marry nor have a sexual relationship until they are 16 years old or more

- **Female Genital Mutilation**

This is against the law. It is also illegal for someone to arrange for a child to go abroad with the intention of having her circumcised.

- **Ritualistic Abuse**

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be condoned is the use of any physical violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is physical abuse and people can be prosecuted even if it was their intention to help the child.

- 1.3 In our school, we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.
- 1.4 We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children make good educational progress.
- 1.5 Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.
- 1.6 Seven Mills follows the procedures outlined by the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board – a guide to procedure and practice for all professionals working with children in Tower Hamlets. This policy is to be read in conjunction with:
  - London Child Protection Procedures (5<sup>th</sup> Edition 2013): <http://www.londoncp.co.uk/> and
  - Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board: Child Protection Procedures for staff Working in Children's, School and Family Settings and
  - Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board: Procedures for Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff working in Children's, School and Family Settings.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

### **2.1 Our aims are:**

- to provide a safe environment for children to learn in;
- to ensure we practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our children.
- 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 these 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 set down the correct procedures for those who encounter any issue of child protection.

## **3 Staff responsibilities**

- 3.1 *Keeping Children Safe in Education (department for Education, 2016)* requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse, which are established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse – these procedures must also cover

circumstances in which a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse. *Keeping Children safe in Education* places the following responsibilities on the school:

- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- The Designated Teacher (or teachers) should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies.
- Staff with designated responsibility for Safeguarding should receive appropriate training.
- Schools should be aware of and follow the correct procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse.

3.2 Mike Hirst (Head Teacher) and Jannet Davies (Deputy Head Teacher) are the named persons designated as Child Protection Officers. Isabel Epstein is the named governor for Safeguarding. It is the duty of these Designated Child Protection Officers to:

- Ensure that the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures are followed in the school.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures.
- Ensure that the Headteacher is kept informed of any concerns.
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services.
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns e.g whether to refer to Children's Social Care.
- Liaise with Children's Social Care over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential'.
- Submit reports to, and attend, Child Protection Conferences.
- Ensure the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as being 'at risk'.
- Provide guidance to parents/carers, children and staff about accessing suitable support.

3.3 All staff have a responsibility to report to the Designated Child Protection Officers any concern they have about the safety of a 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 scrutinizing applicants, verifying their identity and obtaining references, as well as the mandatory check of List 99 and DBS checks. We follow the DfES guidance set out in *Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service, DfES 2002/0278*.

All staff are required to provide relevant information about any person who lives or works in the same household as them who may pose a risk to children. (Keeping Children Safe in Education: Childcare Disqualification requirements – supplementary advice)

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

- 5.1 Any action taken by the Designated Child Protection Officers when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in accordance with the procedures outlined by the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- 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:
- Record their concerns on the same day on the relevant form (attached at Appendix A). This recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observation or disclosure. The account must be signed and dated and then handed to one of the Designated Child Protection Officers.
  - The Designated Child Protection Officer to whom the account has been handed will abide by the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and may refer the matter to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Tower Hamlets Children's Social Care. The Duty Team can be contacted on 0207 364 3444 for advice and to discuss whether or not to make a Record of Concern (ROC)
  - In some circumstances parents *may* be notified but staff should *not* notify parents in advance if there is any risk of further endangering the child or children involved, compromising the integrity of any evidence which may later be used in court, or cause any alleged perpetrator of child abuse to be protected from investigation.
  - Only the Designated Child Protection officers should make decisions about when to disclose to parents and other staff must assume that information about Child Protection issues is strictly confidential, and act accordingly.
- 5.4 Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as 'at risk' or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register.
- 5.5 If a pupil about whom safeguarding concerns have been raised, changes school, one of the Designated Child Protection Officers will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.

## **6 Physical restraint**

- 6.1 There may be times when adults, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. We follow the guidance given in the DfES circular 10/98 on The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. The headteacher will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to him or her immediately, and to record it in the class Incident Book.

## **7 Allegations against staff**

- 7.1 If an allegation 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 wrongdoing. 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. **If a concern is raised about the Head Teacher, the head of Children's Social Care should be informed on 0207 364 3444.**

## **8 Staff training**

- 8.1 All adults in the school receive regular training to raise their awareness of abuse, and to improve their knowledge of the child protection procedures that have been agreed locally. In-house training on the school's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures is done at the start of each new academic year and also when new staff join the school throughout the year. A Local Authority Trainer (Sheila Leighton) does training for all school staff every two years on the types of abuse and what to look out for when working with children and families. The Designated Child Protection Officers attend relevant LBTH training courses throughout the year to receive updates on changes to legislation, policy and procedure in the area of child protection.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016) says:

'Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example information for schools and colleges can be found on the TES, MindEd and the NSPCC websites.'

Schools and colleges can also access government guidance as required on a range of safeguarding issues via GOV.Uk and other government websites.

## **9 Confidentiality**

- 9.1 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.

### **9.2 Transparency for Parents**

*Keeping children Safe in Education (2016)* highlights the school's role in protecting children from abuse. The Local Authority suggests that schools include the following statement in school brochures or information documents to parents/carers.

"All schools have a clear responsibility placed on them by the Children Act 1989 and by guidance from the Department for Education to safeguard the welfare of all their pupils. In doing so, schools are expected to consult with Children's Social Care if they believe there is a possibility that a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect.

A referral to Children's Social Care is not intended to be an accusation of any particular action or against any particular person. It is the reporting of concerns which have come to the school's attention. This is in accordance with Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board Child Protection Procedures.

Seven Mills Primary School has a Child Protection Policy and this refers to Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children's Board Child Protection Procedures. Both of these documents are publicly available for parents/carers to see.

The Designated Child Protection Officers are Mike Hirst (Head Teacher) and Jannet Davies (Deputy Head Teacher), both of whom will be happy to discuss any questions/concerns that parents/carers may have about Child Protection practice”

**10 Monitoring and review**

- 10.1 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. Governors will regularly monitor and review any incidents detailed in the 'Safeguarding' file, while a named governor participates in the school's training with regard to child protection procedures.
- 10.2 This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

**Signed by Chair of Governors.....**

**Date:.....**