

GORSE HILL PRIMARY
SCHOOL
CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY AND GUIDANCE



March 2016

Reviewed November 2017

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's safeguarding policy.

School Mission Statement

This statement outlines the main principles and values which support the curriculum and the life and development of the school.

To ensure that this happens, we aim;

- to provide a safe and happy atmosphere in which all individual's needs are catered for;
- to provide a stimulating environment which will inspire, motivate and support every pupil towards achieving their personal best;
- to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to match the abilities and aptitudes of individual pupils;
- to promote self-discipline and acceptable behaviour through respect and tolerance for one another and to show that each individual is valued so that they gain in confidence and maturity;
- to foster spiritual and moral development and to promote cultural awareness, setting expectations for behaviour attitudes to work and sensitivity to others;
- to create an ethos of respect for the religious beliefs of others.

We aim to ensure that our parents and our community understand and respect all that we are trying to achieve. We want them to help us to achieve our aims and to be proud that their children come to this school.

Reference to the 'Keeping children Safe in Education 2016' has been made in the production of this policy.

It is our aim that all parents, staff and pupils accept this and support a common code of values and discipline for the school, in order to establish the highest possible standards and exceptions. This will set the framework for all that we do.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Our aim is to promote equality of opportunity and high achievements for all pupils and to maintain a positive atmosphere throughout the school in which pupils and staff may develop to the fullest extent.

Gorse Hill Primary School seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic. These include: race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, spend convictions. In this we include all members of the extended school community- pupils,

staff, governors, parents and others from our local community. Partners, contractors and other visitors to the school are also expected to adhere to this policy.

Racial Equality

At Gorse Hill Primary School we are opposed to all forms of racism, including those forms directed against individuals and groups on the grounds of their colour, racial group, ethnic, cultural or national origins, traveller or refugee status, and asylum seekers. In order to realise our commitment to race equality, we will take all steps necessary to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between persons of different racial groups
- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

The Policy

This policy applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school. We recognize that lunchtime supervisors, administrative staff and volunteers, as well as teachers, could be the first point of disclosure for a child.

Philosophy

We believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

Aims

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need for Child Protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured internal procedure to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To promote understanding and build relationships with other agencies in order to work together more efficiently
- To check the criminal background of adults regularly coming into contact with the children.

The Delegated People for Child Protection is: Mrs L Bates and Miss C Coxe

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In his/her absence Mrs K Chrysler/Mr Bates

The school will ensure that:

- It has a designated member of staff who has undertaken at least a Level 4 multi-agency training course provided by Trafford Safeguarding Children's Board.
- All members of staff have received at least Level 1 safeguarding training.
- All members of staff develop an understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond to a pupil who may disclose abuse.
- Parents have an understanding of the responsibility of the school and staff for Child Protection by including information in the School Prospectus and website and at new intake parent meetings.

All staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions. All staff are aware of the document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (March 2016) and understand their responsibilities.

Staff working in the Education Service will on occasions be asked by Social Services for information on a child about whom there are concerns about abuse or neglect. The Education Service itself does not have investigative responsibility in child protection work, but schools have a role in assisting the Social Services by referring concerns and providing information.

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to investigate where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is at significant risk of or suffering significant harm and to assess the needs of the child and family.

The Multi-agency, Referral and Assessment Team (MARAT) – The Social Services Department, Telephone 0161 912 5125, should be the first point of contact for the School's designated person when dealing with alleged/actual cases of child abuse.

Categories of Abuse

Child abuse is generally categorized under the following 4 areas.

- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Emotional

Staff must also be aware of the impact which Domestic Violence, Substance Misuse, Mental Health and Extremist Views can have on children and where staff are aware of such incidents between adults they must share their concern and information with the designated person.

Guidance

- Children are individuals whose rights, needs and welfare are paramount

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- Promoting children's well being and safeguarding them from significant harm depends crucially upon effective information sharing, collaboration and understanding between agencies and professions.
- Children have a right to be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- In all situations parents will be informed about issues concerning their children's welfare unless the safety of the child will be prejudiced by doing so.
- In **NO** circumstances will parents be contacted where sexual abuse is suspected unless the assault was by a total stranger.

Vulnerable Groups

Certain individuals or groups of children may be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect because of **risk factors** in their family or environment, or because of the way they are perceived by their carers.

Recognising these vulnerable groups may enable practitioners to take steps to promote and safeguard the well-being of such children and to respond appropriately to concerns.

It is important, however, not to stigmatize families because of the presence of particular risk factors; whilst the risks of maltreatment may be higher, the majority of children within these vulnerable groups are loved and cared for and do not experience abuse.

Parental factors

Young or single parents, parents with learning difficulties, those who themselves have experienced adverse childhoods and those with any mental health problems, including problems of drug or alcohol abuse, and those who live with intimate partner violence and abuse are all more at risk of abusing or neglecting their children. They may often need extra support in meeting their children's needs and may be more vulnerable to the stresses inherent in parenting.

Social factors

Families living in adverse social environments, for example due to poverty, social isolation or poor housing may also find it both materially and socially harder to care for their children. Where such issues are affecting a child's care, it may be possible to intervene to support the family at an early stage before the child suffers harm.

Child factors

Age plays an important role in the patterns of child abuse. Younger children are much more vulnerable to physical abuse and neglect, with at least 10% of all abuse involving children under the age of 1.

Children with disabilities are much more at risk of experiencing abuse of all kinds. A wide variety of factors may contribute to that risk including sometimes greater

dependence on carers, increased stresses on the carers and difficulties for the young person to communicate concerns. It is also well documented that people with disabilities face barriers when accessing health services. Particular attention should therefore be given to supporting the needs of children with disabilities and being alert to signs, symptoms and behavioural indicators that may indicate abuse or neglect.

Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher/Person for Child Protection

- Ensure all staff members know who you are, and provide training and support
- To be fully conversant with the policies and procedures of the school and the procedures established by Trafford Safeguarding Children's Board (TSCB)
- Ensure all members of staff teaching/non-teaching are aware of and understand the child protection procedures and their role within them
- To liaise with the Social Services Department and other agencies through a multi-agency approach where there is concern about a pupil
- To liaise with the relevant staff over teaching in the curriculum regarding child protection issues
- To keep written records of concern about children even where there is no need to make a formal referral to Social Services immediately
- Keeping all records in a secure location (CPOMS)
- To take part as appropriate in case conferences, strategy meetings, and core group meeting
- To attend appropriate training and to disseminate such information to members of staff

Every member of staff (both teaching and non-teaching) and every Governor are responsible for ensuring they know:

1. The name of the designated teacher/person and her/his role
2. That they have an individual responsibility for referring Child Protection concerns using the proper procedures
3. Where the copies of the Child Protection Procedures are located

Procedures

If any member of staff, either teaching or non-teaching, has a child protection concern about a pupil he/she will **immediately** inform the designated person and record accurately and factually the event(s) giving rise to concern using a Cause for Concern Form. These records are confidential.

Staff involved should make careful notes of their concerns including any visible injuries, comments made by the child, and observations of the behaviour and emotional state of the child. It should be given to the designated person.

The designated person will follow the procedures set out by Trafford's Safeguarding Children's Board Procedural.

Guidance for all Staff

- Clarify what you are being told.
- Reflect back to the child what you have written down.
- Tell the child you are glad they told you and acknowledge that they have been very brave telling you.
- Questions should be limited to those which are needed to confirm or allay suspicion i.e. how the injury occurred.
- The emphasis should be on **Listening to the child**
- Leading questions or intimate examinations could hamper any investigation by the Police or Social Services (DO NOT ask a child to undress or show you signs of abuse they say have been inflicted upon them).
- Be honest about your position, who you will tell and why
- Make sure the child knows what you are doing next
- Make careful notes
- Refer to the designated person
- Remember the rule of confidentiality
- If possible or deemed necessary, have a second adult present to witness and/or make notes.

Dealing with Disclosure

In the event of a child disclosing abuse to a member of staff it is important that they respond appropriately. Where alleged child abuse is concerned it is not possible to guarantee confidentiality. The pupils must be helped to understand the need to share information with the designated person. Great care and sensitivity will be required in order to support and reassure the pupil who may already be under severe emotional distress.

Child to Child Abuse

Any allegations received by a member of staff that a child or young person under the age of 18 years has sexually or seriously physically abused a child or children under the age of 18 years should be referred to the designated person or Headteacher

Monitoring and Recording

Monitoring is important in the following circumstances:

- All records must be kept until the young person reaches the age of 25.

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- All records of concern, minutes of meetings including Family Support, child in Need, Child Protection and Looked After review conferences will be kept on our secure CPOMs system.
- It is the responsibility of every member of staff to record concerns immediately and to pass to the Designated Officer.

Abuse by Professionals

Where there are concerns about abuse by a member of staff, the designated person and the Headteacher must be informed immediately. Where an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors must be informed. If an allegation is made regarding the designated person, the Headteacher must be informed. The procedure in the TSCB Procedural Guide will be followed. (www.tscb.co.uk)

Staff Support

The stress on staff involved in any aspects of child protection work is considerable and the school will ensure that such staff are properly supported. It is the responsibility of the 'Designated Person for Child Protection' to support the staff concerned and if necessary seek help from outside the school.

Supporting Children

The school will include materials and activities in the curriculum which are designed to help pupils to be less vulnerable to abuse.

The school has access to a range of services and therapies to support children. This includes Play Therapy, Foundations for Change, Sunrise, Victim Support, SCIP worker, Champion Education as well as other external services.

Confidentiality

All matters relating to Child Protection are confidential and the Headteacher/designated teacher will disclose any such information on a need to know basis only.

Staff need to be aware, however, that they have a professional responsibility to share information about the protection of children with other agencies.

Staff cannot keep secrets and must refer disclosed information to the appropriate agencies. Child Protection records must be kept securely.

Information about the school's responsibility with regard to child protection will be given in the School Prospectus and on the Website.

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Parents will be informed of concerns unless staff are certain the safety of the child will not be prejudiced by doing so. **In NO circumstances will parents be contacted where sexual abuse is suspected unless the assault was by a total stranger.**

Review

The school's policy and procedures for dealing with child protection issues will be reviewed annually.

Signed by Governors: _____

Date: _____