

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

To inform staff, parents / carers and governors about the school's responsibilities.

Purpose of a Child Protection policy

To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

School Staff

Teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with the children.

Recognise the important role the school has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect and the appropriate referral process.

Ethos of the School

The school aims to develop an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and listen

Policy Review

The Governing Body of our school is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy and for reporting back to Children's Services.

Mayville Primary School - Mission Statement

Mayville primary School is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its pupils and attempts to create an ethos in which pupils feel secure, valued, listened to and taken seriously.

Statutory Framework

'Working together to safeguard children (1999)' requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse, which are established by the Area Child Protection Committee. Schools are also expected to ensure they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse – these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

DfEE Circular 10/95 (Protecting Children From Abuse: The role of the Education Service) 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.

- A designated teacher/s should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaisons with other agencies.
- Staff with a designated responsibility from Child Protection should receive appropriate training. The training should be attended every two years.
- Schools should be aware of and follow the correct procedures established by the Area Child Protection Team
- 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 is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse.
- School procedures will be in line with the London Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures and "Working together to Safeguard Children".

Circular 10/95 also states that "parents should be made aware of the school Child's Protection Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interests of the child."

The Designated Teacher/s

The designated Team for Child Protection at Mayville Primary School are Ms C Russell (Head Teacher) her role is to:

- Ensure that the correct Child Protection procedures are followed in the school
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures. Staff will be provided with appropriate training every three years.
- Ensure that the Head Teacher 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. refer to social services).
- Liaise with Social services teams over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Submit reports to, and attend Child Protection Conferences, core groups, strategy meetings and other multi agency planning meetings.
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as 'as risk'.
- Ensure that the Governing Body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- Provide, with HT, an annual report to the Governing Body detailing the number and type of incidents/cases and number of children referred to social services and who are subject to a Child Protection Plan (anonymised).
- Provide guidance to parents / carers, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

All adults (including supply teachers and volunteers) new to our school will be made aware of the school's policy and procedures.

School Procedures

- If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform one of the following persons Ms C Russell (Head Teacher).
- Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observation.

The account must be dated and signed. These records will be kept confidentially and securely and are separate from the pupil records. We will ensure that an indication that there is a confidential child protection file is marked on a child's general file.

- The designated officer to whom the report has been handed will decide whether concerns should be referred to social services; (The Head Teacher must be briefed before a referral is made), Parents will be informed by the School that a referral is being made to Social Services except when there is a disclosure concerning sexual abuse or a possibility of significant harm to the child.
- If a referral is made to social services, the designated officer will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the First Response Team immediately following the telephone referral.
- Particular attention is 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.
- If a pupil who is known to the Child Protection register changes school, Ms Russell will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.

When to be Concerned

Staff should be concerned about a pupil if he or she:

- Has any injury, which is not typical of the bumps or scrapes normally associated with children's injuries.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).
- Confused or conflicting explanations are given on how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, which is usually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

Dealing with a Disclosure

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without showing shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child but not make promises, which it might not be possible to keep.
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Social Services.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.

- Listen, rather than ask direct questions.
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions.
- Not criticise an alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

Record Keeping

When a pupil has made a disclosure the member of staff should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non – verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Support

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a Child Protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with one of the nominated person.

Allegations Involving School Staff

If a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Headteacher.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Headteacher. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation.

(If the concerns are about the Headteacher, the Head of Education Welfare Service must be contacted on 020 8496 1718 or 020 8496 1719) and the Chair of Governors should be informed immediately without first informing the HT.

The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but s/he will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the local Social Services Team in accordance with the Child Protection Education Welfare Service or a Senior officer from Social Services.

If the Headteacher decides that the allegations warrant further action through Child Protection Procedures s/he must make a referral direct to the local Social Services team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence it will be necessary to contact Social Services before informing the member of staff.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Social Services the Headteacher will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

For further Information you should contact:

Waltham Forest Social Services through Social Services Direct on

Telephone: 020 8496 2311

Fax – 020 8492 2313

Out of Hours

Telephone – 020 8496 3000

Your local Police Station:

Tel: 0300 123 1212

Confidentiality

DfEE circular 10/95 acknowledges that child protection raises issues of confidentiality, which must be clearly understood by all staff in the Education Service. This circular advises that all staff in the Education Department, both teaching and non-teaching staff have a 'responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Social Services and the Police). If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information be kept a secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he / she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will only be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contacts. Child Protection records should be kept securely locked'.

Duty of Care

Any person employed by a local authority has the legal obligation to follow child protection procedures.

The individuals (you and I) not the school will be held accountable for keeping confidential, information which subsequently results in the death of a child.

Not all Child Protection information results in a referral – small pieces of information may not amount to much on their own, but can help to contribute to a “jigsaw” picture of abuse.

Mayville's Child Protection Officers

All school staff should

- Make a record of all information and concerns as soon after the event as possible (please find child protection concern sheet in your folder).
- Include nagging doubts and "hearsay".
- Pass information onto Designated Person for Child Protection.

Types of Abuse

1. Physical Abuse

- Hitting/ kicking
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Poisoning
- Burning
- Scalding
- Drowning
- Suffocating

2. Neglect

- failure to provide food and appropriate clothing
- failure to ensure personal hygiene
- failure to ensure attendance and punctuality at school
- failure to allow access to medical care or treatment
- lack of stimulation for the child
- failure to protect from physical harm and danger and to provide shelter

3. Emotional Abuse

- Rejection/ isolation
- Degrading/ devaluing
- Corrupting/ exploiting
- Inconsistent parenting
- Terrorising
- Causing a child to feel frightened/ in danger

4. Sexual Abuse

The highest risk group – 4-8 year olds with abuse often continuing for three – five years.

Indicators of sexual abuse:-

Continual/ excessive masturbation

Play/ acting out

Precocious language

Drawings/ writing

Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections/ may make many visits to the toilet

Self harm/ self mutilation

Damage/ soreness to genitalia, anus or mouth – most reported cases of sexual abuse are oral sex, repeated wetting or soiling the bed.

How to respond to a child who is disclosing abuse.

- Be aware of your non-verbal messages, eg body language and eye contact. You say things like, “What happened next? How did that make you feel?”
- Keep responses short, simple, slow, quiet, and gentle. React calmly.
- Do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Do not judge the abuser.
- Do not interrogate the child; observe and listen. You can reflect in what they have told you eg “Have I got this right? You said that”
- **DO NOT PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYONE.**
- Do say “I am worried about you – I will need to talk to someone else about what I can do next.”
- Do write up the disclosure on the school form as soon as possible and pass to one of the Child Protection Officers who will discuss it with you.

Confidentiality

Disclosures should be given to one of the designated Child Protection Officers and shared with anyone else on a “NEED TO KNOW” basis only.

Child Protection Governor (responsibilities under Section 175 of Education Act 2002 “to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm.

Note that “staff” covers ALL adult staff on site, including temporary, supply and ancillary staff and volunteers working with children.

Child Protection - School Prospectus

DfEE circular 10/95 – Protecting Children from Abuse (see section 9) highlights school’s role in protecting children from abuse.

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

A referral to Social Services 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 Waltham Forest’s Child Protection Procedures.

Mayville Primary School has a Child Protection policy and a copy of Waltham Forest Child protection Procedures. Both of which are available for parents / carers.

The designated teacher for Child Protection are:

Ms A Varndell

Ms. C. Russell (Head Teacher)

Any one of the above named people will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns parents / carers may have about Child Protection Practice.

This policy will be reviewed annually.