

Our Child Protection Policy is a reflection of our mission statement. At St Scholastica's Primary School our Mission Statement says  
*"We wish to educate the whole person through the integration of intellectual, spiritual, moral, emotional, psychological, social and physical development."*

This is done in

*"partnership with the wider community, especially the home and parish, where the development of the whole person is nurtured."*

### **Code of Practice**

Schools (including independent and non-maintained special schools) and further education institutions have a duty under the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils. The school is committed to increasing the participation of all pupils in the five outcomes from the Every Child Matters agenda. The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to set a clear protocol of action and a framework of our responsibilities and legal duties in relation to the welfare of all children in our care.

We ensure we have designated senior persons for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. ***Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Mulholland and the Deputy Safeguarding Leads are Nick Blackham and Emma Cousins.*** We have a nominated governor responsible for child protection. ***Our governor responsible for child protection is Althea Marshall.***

### **Aims**

Our aim is to ensure a reliable and effective response in the event of any concern for your child's welfare, and to support your child and your family.

We aim to put children's needs first at all times. We encourage children to be confident and assertive, and our staff aim to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with the children in our care, so that they know they will be listened to and believed.

### **Our objective is:**

- Prevention through the curriculum and pastoral support offered to pupils and their families.
- To raise the awareness of the school community of the need for child protection and their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children thought to be at risk.
- To emphasis the need for good levels of communication between all members of the school community.
- To develop a structure in 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 effectively.
- To integrate a child protection curriculum within the existing curriculum, allowing for continuity and progression throughout the school.
- To develop a network of support for young people and the adult members of the school community.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

This Child Protection Policy complies with all relevant legislation and other guidance or advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

This Child Protection Policy adheres to the following concepts from the UN Convention on The Rights of the Child:

- ***Non discrimination*** - All the rights apply to all children equally regardless of their race, sex, religion, language, disability, opinion or family background. (Article 2)
- ***Best interests of child*** - When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what is best for the child. (Article 3)
- ***The child's view*** - Children have the right to say what they think about anything which affects them. When courts or official organisations make decisions which affect children, they must listen to what children want and feel. (Article 12)

This policy is part of our safeguarding policy and is supported by Safer Recruitment and the Health and safety policies.

### **Definition of Abuse**

There are many different types of abuse. Children can be abused by an adult's direct actions (e.g., beating a child) or because of an adult's inactions (e.g., not feeding or bathing a child), and even by an adult's indirect actions (e.g., domestic violence, addiction, etc).

Children can be abused by adults as well as by other young people or children.

The authorities will be notified if any professional suspects that a child is either suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

Sometimes a single traumatic event constitutes 'significant harm' to a child; and, sometimes, a build-up of concerns or a series of incidents over time also gives rise to 'significant harm'.

The law recognises the following categories of abuse under the Children Act (1989):

## Physical

- Where adults physically hurt or injure a child by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, etc
- Giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison is also considered physical abuse

## Sexual

- Where adults use children to meet their own sexual needs
- This might be full intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling
- Showing children pornography and using sexualised language with children is also sexual abuse

## Emotional

- Where there is a persistent lack of love and affection that damages children emotionally
- Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can make a child very nervous or withdrawn
- Seeing or hearing another person being harmed also constitutes emotional abuse, as in Domestic Violence and parental Substance Misuse

## Neglect

- Where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs, for example for clothing or food
- Children might also be left unsupervised and alone
- Sometimes adults fail or refuse to give children their love and affection

The Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges called *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015* has the following expansion on the above.

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of

inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

"The curriculum needs to be delivered in a school with an ethos which empowers children; a school which allows them to voice ideas, feelings and opinions, treats them with respect, values their contribution and lets parents make a contribution to the educational process."

From 'Responding to Child Abuse'

This statement is fully supported by our school Mission Statement.

At St. Scholastica's Primary School it is recognised that teachers and all staff play an important role in identifying potential cases of child abuse. For our procedures to work, it is important that all staff know and adhere to our Child Protection (CP) policy. It relies on the skills and expertise of every class teacher and adult within the school to recognise or report concerns. All new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school.

All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures and the policy is made available to them.

All staff have a total commitment to child protection. They raise children's awareness about themselves through Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) & the Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum, and developing a trusting climate so that children feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings. These also equip the children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

St. Scholastica's has a policy of partnership between home and school, but with child abuse, or suspicion of child abuse, our first and only responsibility is to the child. We may not be able to prevent child abuse, but by following child protection procedures, we are trying our best to protect all our children.

All teachers make sure, through their care of children, to try to ensure that children keep safe, remain healthy. Suspected cases are reported, procedures adhered to and subsequent actions are left to the appropriate agencies. We also care for children who have been abused and understand their problems.

### **Domestic Violence**

Seeing, hearing or knowing of a parent being abused is traumatic for children and can have long-term damaging emotional and psychological effects. Wherever Domestic Violence is suspected in a home where a child is resident, we have a duty under Hackney's Corporate Domestic Violence Policy to refer this information to Social Care services.

### **Guidelines**

In reporting concern or suspicion, all adults in school must follow the following procedures. The designated teacher or one of the leadership group will then follow the Child Protection Procedures. Staff are in contact with children all day and are in a position to detect possible abuse. They must not think that by voicing concern that they are necessarily starting procedures. The criteria should be that they have '*reasonable suspicion*' and under the Children Act, 1989, this definition has been extended to include '*or may suffer in future*'.

By following child protection procedures we:

- Protect the child to the best of our ability
- Avoid delay
- Provide consistency
- Protect all staff
- It ensure that, if further action is taken by another agency, then the school has followed the protection procedures.

If a child discloses abuse or staff are suspicious, there are three things to do:

1. Report immediately to the designated DSCA, or one of the deputies if she or he is not available.
2. Do not speak to the parents.
3. Do not promise a child that it will be kept a secret.

In school we follow the Hackney Child Protection Procedures. It is very important in these cases that prompt and correct procedures are followed. Please see the flow chart **What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused** on page 7 of this policy.

The reporting teacher will be told of any further action taken i.e. referral to Children Social Care, monitoring or other action such as an investigation by external agencies. Any information regarding meetings, case conferences or action taken will be followed through and the teacher concerned informed. Depending on the case and circumstances in school either the designated teacher or the class teacher will attend any case conferences.

Staff have an important role in hearing what children have to say. The school can provide a neutral place where the child feels safe to talk. Sensitivity to disclosure is vital. Staff must listen carefully to what the child is saying, treat it seriously, and value what they say. The teacher or member of staff will then have to make a written report of what the child has disclosed, state their name, sign and date it. The designated teacher who is a member of the leadership team will take the information and make a decision on appropriate action. Members of staff should not probe for more information or investigate issues raised by what the child has disclosed but only open ended questions as prompts or to gain clarity.

Children may feel that they will not be believed, or that they will be punished. Staff need to say that whatever has happened is not their fault. Fear of the consequences of telling is very common. It can be very tempting to offer a promise of confidentiality to the child; this is not realistic. The child needs to hear the truth about what will happen, together with a commitment of support to the child. It is crucial not to ask leading questions. Our role is to enable the child to speak and then know what to do next.

A list of children causing concern is kept in the Head's office. This enables us to monitor all children, who, for whatever reason, are a cause for concern. Any written records regarding a child are kept in their confidential school folder, which is passed on to any school they might transfer to. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on the list. Teachers must inform the head teacher of any changes/additions so that this list can be kept up to date.

All members of staff have a school CP Folder that contains more detailed information on our Child Protection Policy, guidelines on signs and indicators of abuse, guidelines on how to fill out reports, referrals, monitoring and record keeping. A copy of the Hackney CP Procedures folder can be located in both leadership offices and in the staff room.

### **Information Sharing**

The Data Protection Act 1998 is not a barrier to sharing information – it simply provides a framework to ensure that information is shared appropriately.

#### **Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing** (*Information Sharing*, 2008)

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information
2. Be open and honest with families about what information can be shared and in what circumstances
3. Seek advice if you are in any doubt
4. Share information with consent, where appropriate and where possible
5. Consider safety and well-being and who may be affected by your sharing this information
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely & secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is only shared with people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is securely shared
7. Keep a record of your decision and reasons for sharing information

### **Children Missing from Education**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to identify children missing or at risk of missing education in their area (including non-attendance when on school roll or moves to another area). Missing children are amongst the most vulnerable in the borough as they are at greater risk of abuse, anti-social/criminal behaviour and sexual exploitation.

The school should follow the procedures for investigating pupil absence in accordance with the Learning Trust Education Attendance Policy. If the school is unable to establish the reason or locate the pupils they should inform their allocated Attendance Officer/Advisor within **10 days** and a Children Missing Education form can be completed at anytime and faxed to The Learning Trust on 0208 820 7208 or [children.missing@learningtrust.co.uk](mailto:children.missing@learningtrust.co.uk). Schools should only remove the child from the roll when instructed to do so by their allocated attendance officer.

If a pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan disappears without any warning the school should immediately notify Social Care Services.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Please refer to 'Keeping children safe in education' July 2015 for more information on indicators and actions.

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism<sup>11</sup>. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel Programme. Please refer to 'Keeping children safe in education' July 2015 for more information on the Channel Programme.

## **Bullying**

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **Racist incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **Health & Safety**

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we have to give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **Parents' & Carers' Responsibilities**

The best way to ensure the highest care for your child is to develop a good partnership and to ensure a continuity of care between your home and our care.

We can do this together by **sharing information regularly** about your child.

If your child has any health problems or has suffered an accidental injury away from our care, you must inform us when you leave a child in our care so that we can keep a record of it. We will both sign and date this record.

Likewise, if your child suffers an injury in our care, we will record it and we will both sign and date this record.

## **Safer Recruitment**

As educators, it is vital that we adopt recruitment and selection procedures that help deter, detect, and reject people who might harm children, or are otherwise considered unsuitable to work with them.

We are committed to ensuring that all staff are vetted and subject to CRB disclosures, several followed up references from previous employers. Please refer to safer recruitment policy for further details.

## **Allegations**

Any allegation against people who work with children should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the organisation. *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)*

An allegation is information or a concern which suggests that an adult working with children and young people

Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child

Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children

has:

## **Retention period of records**

The school which the pupil attended until statutory school leaving age (or the school where the pupil completed sixth form studies) is responsible for retaining the pupil record until the pupil reaches the age of 25. This retention is set in line with the Limitations Act 1980 which allows that a claim can be made against an organization by a minor for up to seven years from their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **Responsibility of governing body.**

Governing bodies must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

- ❑ Schools have a responsibility to promote inter-agency cooperation to improve the welfare of children. *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.*
- ❑ Accountable for the school having policies and monitoring compliance with those policies
- ❑ Have a named link governor to liaise on child protection, although
- ❑ Allegations against the head teacher will be dealt with by the chair of governors or vice chair if necessary, and ensure that they liaise with the Learning Trust. Allegations should be reported straight to the local authority.
- ❑ Must ensure that the school has:
  - CP Policy
  - Safe recruitment procedures – please refer to safer recruitment policy.
  - Checks for staff and volunteers ( including Criminal Record Bureau and ISA barring lists )
  - Designated staff member plus deputy – CP training every 2 years

- All other staff who work with children are trained in CP every 3 years
  - Remedies for weaknesses or deficiencies in CP arrangements
  - Reviewed its policies and procedures annually.
  - Should appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children.
- Governing body should consider how children are taught about safeguarding including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

Agreed By Governors: 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Presented to staff: January 2016

Signed by Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Head teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Review date: October 2016

#### Useful Contact Details:

- Hackney CSC First Access and Screening Team (FAST): 020 8356 4844/5500
- Out of Hours: 020 8356 2710
- Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) @ Police: 020 8217 6537
- HLT Safeguarding in Education Team: 020 8820 7255
- Local Authority Designated Officer (L.A.D.O.): 020 8356 4569
- City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board: 020 8356 4183
- NSPCC- 24-hour Helpline: 080 8800 5000
- Disclosure and Barring Service (D.B.S.): [www.gov.uk/db](http://www.gov.uk/db)

#### Useful guidance documents:

Hackney well-being framework and resource guide:

[http://www.hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/CYPS\\_resource\\_guide.pdf](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/Assets/Documents/CYPS_resource_guide.pdf)

London Child Protection Procedures:

<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

Working Together to safeguard Children:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)

Keeping Children Safe in Education:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418686/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418686/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Information sharing:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419628/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_safe\\_guarding\\_practitioners.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safe_guarding_practitioners.pdf)

Hackney code of conduct:

<http://staffroom.hackney.gov.uk/code-of-conduct.htm>

Whistle Blowing Policy:

<http://www1.learningtrust.co.uk/bulletin/HLTdocuments/Hackney%20Whistleblowing%20Policy%20July%202014.pdf>

# What To Do

## If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused.

This diagram illustrates what action should be taken and who should take it when there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.

### A FLOW CHART FOR REFERRAL

