

Beech Hall School



Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

This policy is available to parents on the website and as a hard copy upon request to the school office.

1 Policy statement

1.1 This policy has been authorised by the Governors, is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers, is available to parents on request and is published on the School website. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils even where this is away from the School, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit. This policy applies to the school's Nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as well as the school.

1.2 Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which, in this policy, means any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment.

1.3 Beech Hall School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The School will take all reasonable measures to:

- ensure that we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers (including staff employed by another organisation) to work with children and young people in accordance with the guidance given in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*, the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended
- ensure that we carry out all necessary checks on the suitability of people who serve on the School's governing body in accordance with the above regulations and guidance given in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*
- ensure that where the School ceases to use the services of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) because that person was considered unsuitable to work with children, a prompt and detailed report is made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)
- ensure that where staff from another organisation are working with our pupils on another site, we have received assurances that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to those staff
- follow the inter-agency procedures of the local Safeguarding Children Board

- protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil
- be alert to signs of abuse both in the School and from outside
- deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse
- design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations
- support children who have been abused in accordance with his / her agreed child protection plan
- be alert to the medical needs of children with medical conditions
- operate robust and sensible health & safety procedures
- take all practicable steps to ensure that School premises are as secure as circumstances permit
- operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse
- consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual children in our School or in our local area
- have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (**DCSF**) in accordance with section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and associated regulations

1.4 Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the School will be taken seriously and in all proper circumstances will be referred to an external agency such as the social services department of the local authority (**SSD**), the child protection unit of the police (**CPU**) or the NSPCC. In each case, the matter should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (**LADO**).

2 The Designated Person

The School has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status and authority (**Designated Person**) to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. The main responsibilities of the Designated Person are:

- to be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection
- to co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the School

- to maintain an ongoing training programme for all School employees
- to monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection
- to liaise with the child protection officer appointed by the SSD (Local Authority Designated Officer)
- to keep parents informed of action to be taken under these procedures in relation to their child in accordance with paragraph 6.9
- to monitor records of pupils in the School on the Child Protection Register (CPR) to ensure that this is maintained and updated as notification is received
- to liaise with other professionals to ensure that children on the CPR are monitored
- where appropriate, to take part in the child protection conferences or reviews
- to inform the SSD in writing when a child on the CPR moves to another school and to inform the new school of the child's status on the CPR

2.1 The Designated Person for the School is Mrs A Bostock. She will -

- advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to her
- keep the Chairman of Governors informed of all actions unless the Chairman of Governors is himself the subject of a complaint. In this situation, the Designated Person should consult with Mrs. Hilary Blackwell (Governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding and child protection)
- liaise with the SSD and other agencies on behalf of the School

2.2 Miss Middleton is also the **Designated Person** for the Nursery and EYFS. She will therefore

- liaise with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate
- inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations
- inform Ofsted of the above as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days

2.3 The Designated Person have undertaken basic child protection training and training in inter-agency working and will attend refresher training at two yearly intervals. They have both completed Safer Recruitment training.

3 Types of abuse

3.1 Abuse can be:

- physical abuse, for example beating or punching
- emotional abuse, for example rejection and denial of affection
- sexual abuse, for example sexual assault or encouraging a child to view pornographic material
- neglect, for example failure to provide appropriate care including nutrition warmth or medical attention

4 Signs of abuse

4.1 Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to)

- the pupil says he has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference
- there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries
- the pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour
- the pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons
- the pupil's development is delayed
- the pupil loses or gains weight
- the pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed
- the pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his parents or carers

5 Duty of employees, governors and volunteers

5.1 Every employee and governor of the School, as well as every volunteer who assists the School, is under a general legal duty:

- to protect children from abuse
- to be aware of the School's child protection procedures and to follow them
- to know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary
- to keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event
- to report any matters of concern to the Designated Person

Every employee is under a legal duty to undertake appropriate training including refresher training at three-yearly intervals

5.2 **Whistle blowing:** All staff are required to report to the Headmistress or, in her absence, the Chairman of Governors, any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm. There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

5.3 **Senior pupils:** Senior pupils who hold positions of responsibility over other pupils will be briefed on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse.

6 Procedures

6.1 **Initial complaint:** A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:

- must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place
- must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer
- must reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Person who will ensure that the correct action is taken
- must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the Designated Person

6.2 **Preserving evidence:** All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, and computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

6.3 Reporting: All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Designated Person and Governor responsible; or if the complaint involves the Designated Person, to the Governor responsible and Chairman of Governors.

6.4 Action by the Designated Person: The action to be taken will take into account:

- the local inter-agency procedures of the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board
- the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the SSD or the police without further investigation within the School
- the wishes of the pupil who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken which, after all appropriate consultation, override a pupil's wishes
- the wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated Person is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, he or she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose
- duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable
- the lawful rights and interests of the School community as a whole, including its employees and its insurers
- if there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Person may consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer or other appropriate professionals on a 'no names basis' without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Person will confirm the referral in writing to SSD within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Person will contact Social Services again.

6.5 External agencies: When the School decides to refer a particular complaint to the SSD or the police, the parents and pupil will be informed in writing of their right to make their own complaint or referral to the Social Services Department or the Child Protection Unit of the police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

6.6 Allegations against staff: The School has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) which aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures follow the guidance in

Chapter 5 of *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*. Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:

- the safety and welfare of the pupils or pupil concerned
- the need for a full and fair investigation
- Where an allegation or complaint is made against a member of staff or a volunteer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Designated Person
- Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Designated Person, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chairman of Governors, or in his absence, the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection

Detailed guidance is given to staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil, for example in one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil, and so on. Further guidance is contained in Staff Handbook. The School's policy on physical restraint is included in the behaviour policy and the Staff Code of Conduct. If the School ceases to use the services of a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) because they are unsuitable to work with children, a compromise agreement will not be used and there will be a prompt and detailed report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay.

6.7 Allegations against pupils: A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. The School will take advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the LADO, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

6.8 Suspected harm from outside the School: A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the School should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and if the member of staff continues to be concerned he or she should refer the matter to the Designated Person.

6.9 Informing parents: Parents will normally be kept informed of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the Designated Person will need to consult the LADO and/or the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection before discussing details with parents.

7. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

7.1 Confidentiality and Information Sharing: The School will keep all child protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The School will co-operate with police and social services to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in accordance with the requirements of *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

8 Monitoring

8.1 The Governor with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, together with the Designated Person, will monitor the operation of this policy and its procedures and make an annual report to the Governors.

8.2 The Governors will undertake an annual review of this policy and how their duties under it have been discharged.

8.3 The Governors will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

9 Contact numbers

9.1 Useful Names and Numbers

Governor with responsibility for Child Protection	Mrs H Blackwell	01625 422192
School Child Protection Officer	Mrs A Bostock	01625 422192
Nursery and Early Years Child Protection Officer	Miss S Middleton	01625 422192
Social Care Access Team for Referrals		01625 534700
Emergency Duty Team		01606 76611
Police Public Protection Unit		01244 612522
Police (Macclesfield)		01625 610000
Safeguarding Children in Education Team		01244 977963
	Chris Greenwood Chris.greenwood@cheshireeast.gov.uk	
LSCB Trainer	Vicky Moran	01625 534778
School Health Team	Steve Hackney	07769 913874

Reviewed by Mrs G.A Yandell: January 2012