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Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Headteachers established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with the following:

- “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 1999
- “Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families” 2000
- “What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused” 2003
- Safeguarding Children in Education Guidance 2004

The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility 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.

We recognise that all staff and Governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

All staff believe that our school should provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that 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 resilience.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children.
- To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding students.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

Procedures

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Surrey LEA and Surrey Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures, and “Working Together to Safeguard Children”. We will ensure that:

- The Governing Body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- We have a designated senior member of the leadership team for child protection who has undertaken single agency Designated Senior Person training and ‘Working Together’ training delivered through the Surrey Area Child Protection Committee, and who undertakes other training as recommended by the LEA every two years.
- We have a member of staff who will act in the Designated Senior Persons absence who has, also received basic multi-agency training, and who will have been briefed in the role.
- All members of staff will receive training annually by the Designated Senior Person in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- All members of staff, volunteers, and Governors know how to respond to a student who discloses abuse and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities in regard to child protection procedures through publication of the school's Child Protection Policy, and reference to it in our prospectus/brochure and home school agreement.
- Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
- Our selection and recruitment policy includes all checks on staff suitability including Criminal Records Bureau checks as recommended by the LEA and in accordance with current legislation.
- The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to the DfES Teachers' Misconduct Team, with the advice and support of Surreys LA and in accordance with the NEOST guidance and related regulations
- Our procedures will be annually reviewed and up-dated.
- The name of the Designated Senior Person will be clearly shown in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- All adults, (including supply teachers and volunteers) new to our school will be made aware of the school's policy and procedures, the name and contact details of the Designated Person and the pamphlet “Safeguarding Children”, and have these explained, as part of their induction into the school.

Responsibilities

We understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children.

We have a Designated Senior Person who is responsible for:

- Referring a child if there are concerns about a child's welfare, possible abuse or neglect to Social Care. A written referral using the Common Referral Form will be faxed/posted/emailed to Social Care as soon as possible within the school day.
- Ensuring that detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from students' records, with a front sheet listing dates and brief entry to provide a chronology.
- Acting as a focal point for staff concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Ensuring that either they or another appropriately informed member of staff attends case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning

meetings, contributes to the Framework for Assessments process, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents.

- Ensuring that any absence of two days, without satisfactory explanation, of a student currently on the child protection register is referred to their Education Welfare Officer and/or Social Worker
- Ensuring that all school staff are aware of the school's CP policy and procedures, and know how to recognise and refer any concerns.
- Providing, with the Headteacher, an annual report for the Governing Body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Senior Person, and by all staff and Governors; relevant curricular issues, number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children referred to SSD and on the child protection register (anonymised).
- Keeping themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant training, at least every two years, provided by the Surrey Area Child Protection Committee or the Safeguarding in Education Team.

Types of Abuse

Child abuse can take many forms, but they are usually divided into four categories:

- Physical abuse - is being physically violent towards a child
- Neglect - is making a child feel unwanted, ugly, worthless, guilty, unloved
- Sexual abuse - is exploiting a child sexually
- Emotional abuse - is failing to provide the things needed for a child to grow

Staff are given full training in child protection and safeguarding.

Supporting Children

We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our school will support all students by:

- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Ensuring that a named teacher is designated for Looked After Children (LAC) and that an up to date list of children is regularly reviewed and updated. The Education of Children in Public Care (ECPC) Team must be made aware of all LAC in the school.
- Providing continuing support to a student (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Headteacher at the students' new school as a matter of urgency, a photocopy of these records should be kept in a confidential file.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Headteacher or Designated Senior Person will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.

We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to SSD with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Education Welfare Service or Social Care on this point.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Senior Person and to seek further support. This could be provided for all staff by, for example, the Headteacher, by Occupational Health, and/or a teacher/trade union representative as appropriate.

We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The document "Guidance on Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings" provides advice on this and the circumstances, which should be avoided in order to limit complaints against staff of abuse of trust, and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.

We recognise that designated staff should have access to support and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised by the LEA.

Staff Recruitment

Safe recruitment and selection processes are used to safeguard students from potential abusers by:

- Including in job adverts and candidate information packs the statement "The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. A criminal record check via the CRB will be undertaken for the successful candidate"
- Verifying the identity and qualifications of the successful candidate.
- Seeking professional references and checking their employment history
- Verifying that they have the health and physical capacity for the job
- Having a face to face interview
- Having a mandatory CRB check and ensuring any job offer is conditional on a satisfactory CRB check.
- Ensuring their induction programme includes Safeguarding Children training and familiarity with the following School policies: Anti bullying, Racism, Internet, Health & Safety and Whistleblowing

Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

All staff should be aware of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy found in the Staff Handbook. We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher or the most senior teacher if the Headteacher is not present. The Headteacher/Deputy Head on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Safeguarding Manager or Lead Officer for Child Protection.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult the Safeguarding Manager or Lead Officer for Child Protection, without notifying the Headteacher first.

The school will follow the LA procedures for managing allegations against staff. Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration. Consultation will be made with the Safeguarding Manager or Lead Officer for Child Protection in making this decision.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors or the Lead Officer for Child Protection.

Physical Intervention/Positive Handling

Our guidance states that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, eg. when a child is endangering him/herself or others, or committing a crime and that, at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

Such events should be reported, recorded and signed by a witness.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention should be appropriately trained. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child, may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

eSafety

Our policy on the prevention and management of eSafety is set out in a separate policy.

Anti-Bullying

Our policy on the prevention and management of 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.

Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing students with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Provide across the curriculum, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Health & Safety

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

Policy Review

The Governing Body of our school is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy, and for reporting back to the LEA.

To be reviewed: September 2017