

Sinclair House School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.
- 1.2 Child abuse takes a variety of forms:
- Physical abuse involves the hitting, shaking or other treatment of a child that can cause actual bodily harm.
 - Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening. This includes non-contact situations, such as showing children pornography.
 - Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of children, such as frightening them, or putting them in positions of danger. It is also an abuse to convey to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.
 - Children are abused also if they are neglected. This could involve failure to provide proper food and warmth, but it might also be failure to see to the emotional well-being of the child.
- 1.3 We have established and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. We ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- 1.4 We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children make good educational progress.
- 1.5 Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the Montessori and National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, how to behave in response to them, have confidence to seek help and know where to go for help

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 To implement **procedures** that enable prevention, monitoring and timely response to circumstances where child protection or safeguarding are an issue.
- 2.2 To raise the **awareness** of all staff and volunteers of the need for child protection and safeguarding and of their **responsibilities** in identifying and responding to children who are suffering/are likely to suffer significant harm.
- 2.2 To establish a **safe environment** in which children can learn and develop.
- 2.3 To equip our **pupils** with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- 2.4 To **support** pupils who have been abused.
- 2.5 To promote understanding and build relationships with **other agencies** in order to work together more efficiently.

These aims are considered in more detail below:

Procedures

The school will ensure that:

- we practise safe recruitment (see 4 below).
- we have a designated teacher for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. Currently the designated member of staff is Carlotta TM O'Sullivan, deputised by Nahid Sheikh.
- the Headteacher and all other staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding effectively and that they keep their knowledge/skills up to date.
- parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the school website – www.sinclairhouseschool.co.uk
- allegations made against the Headteacher, staff or volunteers are dealt with effectively, in accordance with Local Authority procedures.

In achieving the above, and in all other child protection and safeguarding matters, we will follow the procedures set out by the Local Authority and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills and the London Child Protection Committee.

3 Awareness and Responsibilities of Staff / Volunteers

Carlotta TM O'Sullivan or Nahid Sheikh is responsible for:

- 3.1 Notifying social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- 3.2 Developing effective links with relevant agencies and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- 3.3 Keeping written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- 3.4 Ensuring all these records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- 3.5 Keeping all matters relating to child protection confidential, and only disclosing such information on a need to know basis.

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

- 3.6 who is the designated members of staff with responsibility for child protection, and what is their role.
- 3.7 the characteristic signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond to a pupil who may disclose abuse.
- 3.8 what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour with children.

- 3.9 their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse or safeguarding issues, and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for child protection.
- 3.10 that all matters relating to child protection are confidential, but that they cannot keep secrets
- 3.11 have a professional responsibility to share information about the protection of children with other agencies.
- 3.12 the CPC must make it clear during interview that confidentiality cannot be promised
- 3.13 the interviewer must not make leading questions
- 3.14 all evidence must be well documented either written or orally on tape

4 Establishing a Safe Environment

The school will ensure that:

- 4.1 safe recruitment practices are always followed to help deter, reject, or identify prospective employees who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. The following checks will be made and kept on record by the school, and any inconsistencies challenged:
 - Identity (candidates will be required to confirm identity through official documents)
 - Academic qualifications (verification will be required)
 - Professional and character references
 - Previous employment history
 - Criminal record check
 - Lists maintained by the DfES, e.g. List 99
 - Health
- 4.2 arrangements are in place to address the following safeguarding issues:
 - Bullying
 - School security
 - Health and safety
 - The use of restraint / physical intervention
 - First Aid / Meeting the medical needs of children with medical conditions
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Domestic violence
 - Transport/school journeys/residential and exchange visits
 - Work experience/child employment
 - Showering/changing
 - Taking/using images of children
 - Internet use
 - Extended School/After School Clubs/school lettings
 - Use of parent and other volunteer helpers
 - Pupils out of school (absent; excluded; 'sent home', etc.)
 - Sex education and relationships.

5 Supporting pupils who have been abused

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil, in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan, through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred under confidential cover to the new school immediately, and that the child's social worker is informed.

6 Working with Other Agencies

The school recognises the importance in achieving successful working relationships with other agencies providing services to children in order to safeguard the pupils in our care. The school will therefore:

- promote understanding and build relationships with other agencies in order to work together more efficiently.
- seek to establish and maintain effective levels of communication between ourselves and other agencies.

7 Monitoring and review

- 7.1 The headteacher and senior member of staff will regularly monitor and review any incidents detailed in the interventions book.
- 7.2 This policy is reviewed annually by Mrs O'Sullivan and Miss Nahid Sheikh and senior member of staff – Miss Katherine Lowson and Miss Stephanie Hodgson.

Signed: 

Date: 28th April 2010