



Flowery Field Primary School

Child Protection Policy

Approved by governors:	May 2015
Date to be reviewed:	May 2016

Child protection policy statement

Introduction

Flowery Field Primary School adheres to the principles outlined in the Children's Act 1989, believing that all children have a right to be protected from abuse. It is the intention of the procedures within this policy to ensure that the appropriate action is taken immediately where it is alleged that a pupil is suspected of being abused. The prime concern at times must be the interests and safety of the pupil(s).

Flowery Field also follows the guidance laid out in the TSCB 'Child Protection Procedures Handbook', including Working together to safeguard children (March 2013) and the Thresholds for assessment and the continuum of needs.

AIMS

- To ensure staff understand the different types of abuse.
- To raise awareness of staff regarding the signs of abuse.
- To ensure staff are aware of their own responsibilities regarding the Child protection procedures.
- To recognise the dilemmas of confidentiality.
- To provide support for both staff who have experienced disclosure and for pupils who have who have disclosed.
- To provide further training for staff and include discussion of child protection issues in the programme of induction for new staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Child Protection Officers

Claire Silk (Deputy Head) is supported by the following staff:

Infant department

Karen Pearson (Assistant Head) and Sue Smith (Assistant SENCO)

Junior department

Lesley Jeffers (Learning Mentor)

Sarah Hooper is named governor for Child Protection/ Safeguarding.

Derek Slinn, as chair of governors, is the named governor where allegations are made against staff.

All members of staff have a responsibility to be aware of the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected child abuse. Staff in regular contact with pupils should be well placed to notice the signs of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, behavioural change or failure to develop as expected.

If any member of staff suspects a pupil may be at risk or hears a disclosure from a pupil, the DCPO must be informed. The member of staff will then be asked to record an accurate account of any discussions or observations regarding the pupil concerned. Any records are then passed to the DCPO, as they are confidential documents and kept in a filing cabinet in the Head's office.

Designated Child Protection Officers (DCPO)

The role of the DCPO is to:

- Ensure Child Protection procedures are in place and updated as appropriate.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of both Tameside Child Protection procedures and school policy.
- Be available to provide advice/support to staff and for confidential discussion about concerns.
- Be available to provide support to pupils.
- Liaise with the Headteacher to keep him/her informed regarding Child Protection issues.
- Liaise with Children's Social Care in accordance with Tameside procedures.
- Keep records of any concerns/ suspected cases of abuse/referrals.
- Co-ordinate arrangements for monitoring of pupils on roll who have been identified as being in need of protection.

It is important at the outset to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about the concerns, and the possible need for referral to Children's Social Care or the Police. However, an inability to inform parents/carers should not prevent a referral being made.

School procedures

Any member of staff having concerns that a pupil may be at risk should always discuss them with a DCPO. Staff may be asked at this stage to complete a written record of their concerns. This record is then kept by the DCPO in the Head teacher's office. The DCPO will decide on a plan of

action according to each individual situation. If appropriate, it is the responsibility of the DCPO to seek further advice. The DCPO would then share relevant information confidentially with the member of staff who had raised the concern and the pupil's key workers on a need to know basis.

If a pupil discloses abuse to a member of staff they should be guided by the following:

- Listen to the child rather than directly question them.
- Never stop the child who is freely recalling events.
- Make notes of the discussion.

The disclosure must be recorded. This record must then be passed onto the DCPO who will inform the Headteacher, make a referral to Children's Social Care and record any action that needs to be taken.

Remember that all information which is recorded MUST be factual. If any hearsay information is recorded, it must be clearly identified as hearsay.

All documentation will be kept securely by the DCPO. The DCPO will share information with confidentially with on a need to know basis with the member of staff who has heard the disclosure to reassure them that action is being taken to protect the pupil. A note of each consultation should be recorded and kept with the child's file.

Handling disclosures

Although you may not seek information, a pupil may wish to confide in you about having suffered some kind of abuse. In such situations, the following guidelines taken from KIDSCAPE should be helpful:

- Find somewhere quiet to talk as soon as possible.
- Stay calm and reassuring.
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what you are told a secret.
- Listen to and believe what the pupil tells you, tell them that, whatever the circumstances, they are not to blame.
- DO NOT PRESS for details – some cases of abuse may need further investigation. It is better for the pupil not to have to repeat details unnecessarily.
- Ask the pupil if he/she has told anyone else.
- Do not make any promises to the pupil – the situation may cause you to react emotionally. Whilst this is an understandable reaction, at such times it is possible that you could make promises you cannot fulfil.

- Tell the pupil you are pleased he/she has decided to tell someone and that this was the right thing to do.
- Let the pupil know you understand how difficult it is to talk about such experiences.

Confidentiality

If a pupil requests confidentially they must be told that this cannot be promised and it should be explained that staff have a responsibility to share information with those adults who will be able to help protect them from harm. The pupil should be reassured that only staff who need to know about it will be told. This could result in the pupil not continuing the conversation, in which case the matter should not be pursued but concerns reported to the DCPO.

Staff have a professional duty to share confidential information about the protection of children with Children's Social Care via the DCPO.

Staff should take care not to discuss information given in confidence outside the appropriate professional contexts.

Recording

As outlined in the section on school procedures, all concerns about or disclosures from pupils regarding any form of abuse or risk of being abused must be recorded. The record should include the time and date, the circumstances and who else was present, as well as giving exact details of what the pupil said. Any comments by the pupil should be recorded as soon as possible after they have been made preferably quoting the exact words used. Signs of physical injury should be recorded using a skin map which can be provided by the DCPO.

Any records/reports are kept by the DCPO and may be passed onto Social Care when a referral is made. In cases of alleged child abuse, which go to court, the court may require the school to provide our Child Protection records. All child protection records are kept in a secure filing cabinet by the DCPO.

As a staff group we need to establish a system to mark files so that staff are aware when there are child protection concerns and that Child Protection information is being kept separately.

The purpose of this is to ensure that staff are aware that the context of some aspects of the curriculum may be highly sensitive issues for some pupils.

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

DCSF (2013) *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'*

Physical Abuse:

'Physical abuse 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, feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fabricated illness or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.'

Emotional Abuse:

'Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Emotional abuse may occur particularly where children are exposed to acts of domestic violence

Sexual Abuse:

'Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.'

Neglect:

'Neglect is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

INDUCTION

New staff meet with the DCPO as part of their induction programme. This meeting covers such issues as clarifying the school procedure; ensuring the member of staff knows where to find and subsequently read the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board Handbook; guidance regarding not being alone with pupils and appropriate physical contact when pupils are stressed, for example if involved in one to one's with pupils, to ensure other staff know when and where this is happening.

CRB checks should be carried out on all appointments, including volunteers.

STAFF TRAINING

It is the responsibility of the DCPO to arrange in-service training for all school staff, as required. (Tameside Education Welfare Service provide a pack, which may be used to facilitate in-service training). All staff must read the Child Protection Policy and sign the declaration confirming they have done so. The signed declaration will be kept in the Child Protection training file by the DCPO.

ALLEGATIONS MADE IN RELATION TO STAFF MEMBERS

Any member of staff hearing an allegation against another member of staff, volunteer or any adult involved in the work of the school, must inform the Headteacher and/or DCPO. The Headteacher and/or DCPO must follow the guidelines as set out in the Essential Guide for All Staff Working Within the Local Education Authority. (See Section 4).

Incidents should be reported to Tameside Safeguarding Children Board as a matter of course.

Children's Social Care should be informed of incidents involving children who are looked after by the Local Authority.

If there is an allegation made against the Headteacher the Chair of Governors must be informed. He must report incidents to Tameside Safeguarding Children Board as a matter of course.

SCHOOL POLICIES

In addition to the school policy for Child Protection, there are other policies in place which have relevance to safeguarding pupils at Flowery Field Primary School. Other relevant policies include:

- Attendance
- Anti-Bullying
- E-Safety
- Behaviour

CHECKLIST FOR CHILD PROTECTION

"I have a concern"

Have you...

- Discussed this with the DCPO? Where the DCPO is not available you must discuss your concern with the Headteacher.
- Had any evidence of or heard any other concerns?
- Completed a written record of your concerns?
- Passed your written record to the DCPO?

"What happens next?"

- The DCPO is responsible for collating information and/or making a referral or consultation as appropriate.
- The DCPO should feedback relevant information on a 'need-to-know' basis, if you have not heard anything then seek clarification from DCPO.
- If you have further concerns, follow the guidance and seek advice from DCPO.
- Remember the DCPO is always available to give reassurance and support.

References:

Tameside's Safeguarding Children's Board (TSCB) produces Child Protection Procedures, which are for the use of all agencies and staff in Tameside. They can be obtained via:-

The TSCB Administrator
Quality Assurance Unit
Union Street
Hyde

SK14 1ND

Telephone – 0161 342 4348

Also via the TSCB Website:

www.tamesidesafeguardingchildren.org.uk