

Ayesha Siddiqa Girls School

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES

Ayesha Siddiqa GIRLS SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES AND POLICY

OUR AIMS:

Ayesha Siddiqa Girls School recognizes its responsibilities for child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognize that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board - formerly the Area Child Protection Committee) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for child protection.

- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospect.

We will notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.

- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognize 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.

This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- The implementation of school behaviour management policies
- A consistent approach, which recognizes and separates the cause of the behaviour from that which the pupil displays.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support pupils and their families
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the pupil's interests to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations

OUR PROCEDURES:

The Designated Child Protection Officers:

- The Designated Child Protection Officer is: _____
- The Deputy Child Protection Officer who will deal with matters in the absence of the Deputy Head, is the Headteacher, Ms Fatima Liyawdeen
- The named person above will all have received the designated person's (multi-agency) child protection training and will liaise in accordance with LSCB and LEA Personnel Procedures.
- They will keep a copy of the LSCB Child Protection Procedures and make these available to staff

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

- To ensure that all staff know the Child Protection Officer is responsible (and in her absence the Headteacher) for Child Protection issues.
- To refer promptly all cases of suspected child abuse to the local social services department or the police child protection team. If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived then it must be remembered that we have no right to prevent the removal of the child. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the Police should be called.
- To maintain and update as necessary the Child Protection Monitoring List.
- To organise regular training on Child Protection within the School. All staff should be trained in child protection at least every three years.
- To ensure that all staff know about and have access to LSCB guidelines.
- To ensure telephone procedures are followed.
- To co-ordinate action where child abuse is suspected.
- To facilitate and support the development of a whole school policy on Child Protection.
- To attend case conferences or nominate an appropriate member of staff to attend on her behalf.
- Maintain records of case conferences and other sensitive information in a secure confidential file and to disseminate information about the child only on a "need to know basis".
- To pass on records and inform the key worker when a child who is on the Child Protection register leaves the school. The custodian of the register must also be informed.
- To raise staff awareness and confidence on child protection procedures and to ensure new staff are aware of these procedures.
- To keep up to date with current practice by participating in training opportunities wherever possible.

THE STAFF

- All staff, including supply teachers and other visiting staff and those supporting school trips, are informed of the designated teachers' name(s) and the school's policy for the protection of children in either of these:

- During their first induction to the school
 - Through the provision of a copy of this policy
 - Through the staff/personnel handbook
 - Information on relevant notice boards
 - Whole staff training, meetings or briefings
- All staff need to be alert of the signs of harm and abuse. They should report any concerns if not immediately, as soon as possible, that day to the designated teacher or named deputy. If in any doubt they should consult with the designated teacher.
 - The Child Protection policy and the LSCB Procedures is available for staff reference and is located in the Deputy Head's office.
 - LEA Personnel Procedures are located in the Deputy Head's office.

Temporary and voluntary staff

These staff will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection by being given a copy of the school handbooks and policy.

THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and management committee members know the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure that they remedy any weaknesses in the child protection procedures of the school and are updated on any changes to the policy and procedures.
- At present, _____ will oversee the safeguarding arrangements of the school. He will liaise with the head teacher and report back to the rest of the committee.
- It would be helpful for all other members of the management committee to have child protection training so that they fully understand their role and functions.
- Must review the schools child protection policy annually.

THE CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

The definitions of abuse outlined below are taken from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children Department of Health 1999.

'Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.'

PHYSICAL ABUSE

This is a physical injury to a child where there is definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly and not prevented?

This includes for example, deliberate poisoning and attempted drowning or smothering and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or refusal to discuss them
- Cigarette burns
- Long bruises- possibly made by a belt
- Teeth marks
- Fingertips/slap marks or bruises
- History of bruises/injuries with inconsistent explanations
- Bilateral black eyes
- Self destruction tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Untreated injuries
- Fear of medical treatment
- Unexplained patterned of absences that could be in order to hide injuries.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Is the persistent or severe emotional ill treatment of a child which has severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of that child? Its diagnosis will require medical, psychological psychiatric, social and educational assessment.

(NB All abuses involves some emotional ill-treatment, this category should only be used when it is the main or sole form of abuse).

Possible signs of Emotional Abuse

- Developmentally delayed
- Inappropriate emotional responses
- Self mutilation
- Extreme passivity or aggression
- Running away
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Excessive fear of situations or people
- Social isolation
- Depression

SEXUAL ABUSE

Is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent. The key elements of child sex abuse are:

1. Betrayal of trust and responsibility
2. Abuse of power for the sexual gratification of the abuser
3. Inability of children to consent

Possible signs of sexual abuse

- Depression, suicidal, self harming
- Anorexic/bulimic
- Acting in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults/peers
- Unexplained pregnancies
- Running away
- Telling of a 'friend with a problem of abuse'
- Sexually abusing a younger child
- Afraid of certain people
- 'Chronic' medical problems (stomach pains/headaches)
- Withdrawn, isolated, excessively isolated

NEGLECT

Is the persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of that child's health or behaviour.

1. This may be exposure to danger or by repeated failure to attend to the physical and development needs of the child.
2. Non-organic failure to thrive may result from neglect of a child but always requires medical diagnosis, by appropriate exclusion of organic causes.

Possible signs of neglect

- 'Failure to thrive' (looks thin, unwell, below average height and weight?)
- Usually hungry
- Has regular accidents (especially burns)
- Poor personal hygiene
- Kept away from school medicines
- Tiredness
- Reluctant to go home
- Poor social relationships
- Frequent lateness/non attendance at school
- Inappropriate clothing

Grave Concern/at risk:

This is not a separate category of child abuse as such but covers a number of situations where a child may be at risk. Children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories, but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of abuse. Grave concern may be felt where a child shows symptoms of stress and distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:

- there is a known child abuser in the family;
- another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- the parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree;

- there is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour;
- the child is exposed to potential risk or exploitation via the Internet e.g. pornographic material or chat rooms.

The Symptoms of Stress and Distress:

When a child is suffering from one or more of the previous four 'categories of abuse', or if the child is 'at risk', she will nearly always suffer from or display signs of stress and distress.

An abused child is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:

- a lack of concentration and a fall-off in school performance;
- aggressive or hostile behaviour;
- moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences;
- difficulties in relationships with peers;
- regression to more immature forms of behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking;
- self harming or suicidal behaviour;
- low self esteem;
- wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy - children who persistently run away from home may be escaping from sexual physical abuse;
- disturbed sleep;
- general personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention seeking behaviour;
- a sudden change in school performance.

Parental Signs of Child Abuse:

Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:

- implausible explanations of injuries;
- unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries;
- injured child kept away from school until injuries have healed without adequate reason;
- a high level of expressed hostility to the child;
- grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development;
- general dislike of child-like behaviour;
- inappropriate labeling of child's behaviour as bad or naughty;
- leaving children unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.

How is abuse often disclosed by child?

- Directly to a teacher or other adult.
- Through a friend
- Sometimes through a child's stories or poems in English or other lessons
- Occasionally we receive an anonymous call.

DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE

Immediate response to the child

If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about possible abuse there are a number of things that should be done to support the child:

- Stay calm and listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying. If shocked by what is being said try not to show it, rather reassure the child.
- question normally without putting pressure on the child
- don't put words into the child's mouth but note the main points carefully
- You may ask questions "*What happened?*" and "*When did it happen?*" Do not go into too much detail because it could adversely affect and subsequent legal proceedings.
- It is OK to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them
- If a disclosure is made the pace should be dictated by the pupil without them being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as "what did they do next?" or "where did they touch you?" It is our role to listen not to investigate. Use open questions such as "is there anything else you want to tell me?" or "yes?" or "and?"
- Accept what the pupil says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as "why didn't you tell me before?"
- Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this
- Don't criticize the perpetrator, this may be someone they love
- **Don't promise confidentiality**, reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the designated teacher) and why. It is important that you don't make promises that you cannot keep such as "I'll stay with you all the time" or "it will be alright now".
- reassure the child and let them know they were right to inform us
- inform the child that this information will know have to be passed on
- Inform the Child Protection Officer straight immediately
- It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example

Helpful things to say or show

Show acceptance of what the child says

"I take what you are saying very seriously"

"I am pleased that you have told me. Thank you for telling me"

If appropriate, "it isn't your fault and you are not to blame at all"

"I am sorry that happened to you"

"I will help you"

Things not to say

"Why didn't you say something before?"

"I really can't believe it"

"Are you sure this has happened?"

"Why?" "Where?" "When?" "Who?" "What?" "How?"

Don't make false promises to the child – like confidentiality – be honest now, any lies will be further abuse and betrayal

Never make statements such as 'I am shocked!' or 'don't tell anyone else'.

- **Concluding the conversation**
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and tell them that you will let them know what is happening at each stage.
- Do not be tempted to try to investigate further the claims – this could lead to contamination of the evidence and could jeopardize any Police investigation and criminal prosecution activity.

Recording Information

- Keep a full record of what was said.
- Make some brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. Notes must be signed and dated.
- Observed injuries and bruises are to be recorded.
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil
- It is important to keep these original notes and pass them to the designated teacher.
- All referrals to Social Services must be followed up within 24 hrs in writing using the referral pro-forma.

MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

It is essential that accurate records be kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. These records should then be kept in secure, confidential files, which are separate from the child's school records. It is important to recognize that regulations published in 1989 do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of any written information relating to Child Protection. However, the preferred practice is for parents to be informed of and agree to a referral being made (unless it relates to Sexual Abuse).

Staff must keep the Deputy Headteacher informed of:

- poor attendance & punctuality
- concerns about appearance and dress
- changed or unusual behaviour
- concerns about health and emotional well being
- deterioration in educational progress
- discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child
- concerns about home conditions or situations
- concerns about pupil on pupil abuse (including serious bullying)

When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. Use of previous records (if available) may prove to be particularly useful in this respect.

Any referral to Social Services by telephone must be confirmed with the specified written form and a copy kept on the confidential school file. A note must be made of the Duty Social Worker and the time at which the call is made. **If parents have not been informed about (or if they have agreed to) the referral being made this must be reported to Social Services.**

Reports may be needed for Child Protection Case conferences or the criminal/civil courts. Consequently records and reports should be:

- factual (no opinions)
- non-judgemental (no assumptions)
- clear
- accurate
- relevant

SUPPORT

Pupils and families

Our school recognizes that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Supporting Staff

We recognize 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 teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

Supporting Children

We recognize that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self blame. 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 pupils by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- 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 (multi agency working)
- Notifying Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.

Confidentiality

- We recognize that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- The Headteacher or Designated Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 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.
- Personal information about all pupils' and their families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All staff will aim to maintain this confidentiality and all records relating to child protection incidents will be maintained by the designated teacher and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children.

Staff have the professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly investigating agencies. If a pupil confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that she has a responsibility to refer for the child's own sake.

Allegations against staff

- We understand that a pupil 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.
- The headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LEA Lead Officer for Child Protection.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Management committee who will consult with the LEAs Lead Officer for Child Protection.
- The school will follow the LEA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school (*see the school's policy on allegations against staff*).

Recruitment

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Have enhanced CRB checks for all teaching staff and those who have contact with children in the school (see the school's Recruitment policy)

Whistleblowing

We recognize 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, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Physical Intervention

- Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- 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.

Parents

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The school is required to consider the safety of the pupil and should a concern arise professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents.
- The school will work with parents to support the needs of their child
- The school aims to help parents understand that the school, like all others, has a responsibility for the welfare of all pupils and has a duty to refer cases to the Social Services in the interests of the child.

When a pupil transfers to another school

- If the pupil is on the child protection register, their Social Worker will be contacted by the designated teacher and informed of the transfer.
- When the child changes schools within the authority, child protection records will be passed on to the designated teacher at the receiving school.
- When the child is moving to another local authority, information will be passed onto the next school's designated teacher. Case conference minutes are not transferred but the date, name of chair, local authority and outcome will be included on the records transferred.

Training

- This school has a commitment to training, updates and attendance at inter-agency child protection meetings. Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met. However it is the responsibility of the individual to notify the appropriate senior member of staff to ensure cover.
- The Designated child protection officer and/or the deputy officer will be expected to cascade learning to the wider staff group via meetings etc. Training for the whole staff team on child protection will take place on a staff INSET day.
- The designated teacher for child protection and the deputy child protection officer will be trained every two years – on the multi-agency course.
- All other staff will receive training at three year intervals.

Multi-agency working, case conferences and core group meetings

- It is important to 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.
- It is generally a requirement for the teacher or year head of a pupil to attend a Child Protection case Conference. Where possible you will be accompanied by the designated teacher but this may not always be possible. You should prepare a report using the pro-forma, presenting this to the chair at the start of the meeting. The chair will gather all information and assess the risks you will be asked for your view in respect of registration.
- If a child's name is placed on the Child Protection register a Core Group will be agreed. All core group members meet regularly monitor and progress the Child Protection Plan and Core Assessment. Attendance at these meetings will be given priority.
- The designated teacher will be available to advise and support you.
- Where no registration has taken place schools may be asked to monitor it is your responsibility to ask for clarity about information required, timescales, and reporting methods.

Further information regarding child protection issues and the policy can be obtained from the Deputy Head teacher's office.

Prevention

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

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always 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.

- Include in the curriculum opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Signed and approved by the Head Teacher:

Signed and approved by School Chair of governors:

Policy updated: February 2010

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