

# Child Protection Policy

## Policy Statement

Everyone employed by Seva Education has a responsibility in relation to child protection. In most cases, this will be the referral of concerns to their line manager. In day-to-day contact with pupils at risk, staff have an opportunity to note concerns and to meet with parents and other associated adults.

## The Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- to raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- to raise awareness of staff's responsibilities under the Prevent duty
- to provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns and cases
- to identify strategies and interventions available to support children at risk
- to ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- to ensure that safe recruitment procedures are operated.

## Procedure

### Designated Safeguard Lead

The designated safeguard lead is Shaun Buchanan

The designated safeguard lead will:

- co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with social care and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse
- act as a source of advice
- ensure that staff are familiar with the policy and procedure
- make referrals, recording and reporting accordingly
- liaise with agencies about individual cases

- organise staff training on child protection and attend training themselves on child protection and inter-agency working (updated every two years)
- assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism (under the Prevent duty)
- undertake Prevent duty awareness training and organise training for other members of staff, as appropriate, based on the risk assessment
- ensure that appropriate strategies for recording and reporting incidents are kept.

## **Governing Body**

The governing body will:

- undertake annual reviews of child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged
- ensure the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism is assessed (under the Prevent duty) by the designated safeguard lead
- receive and discuss updates provided by the designated person as part of the Head's report.

## **School Staff**

School staff should:

- report any child protection concerns immediately, where possible to the designated person or their deputy
- be alert to any behavioural or other indications that a pupil is holding, or hiding, extremist views and, where applicable, make a referral to the Channel programme
- consult with the designated safeguard lead if in any doubt as to how to proceed
- ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or allegations of harm to a pupil
- ensure that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with pupils on another site
- receive training in child protection. In addition to regularly updated formal training sessions, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required. These can be updated via email, e-bulletins or staff meetings.

## **Partnerships with Parents**

Where possible, staff work, and share information, with parents. We seek permission to liaise and share information with outside agencies unless it places the pupil at risk. In these cases, we seek advice from social care or make a child protection referral.

When working with parents, we acknowledge and respect the fact that families from different backgrounds and cultures have different approaches to child-rearing — provided that this does not place the pupil in question at risk. While being sensitive to racial and cultural differences we recognise that some customs are not acceptable in the UK and are regarded as child protection issues. Such an issue is female genital mutilation. Staff are made aware of s.74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015:

“If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the police.”

## **Dealing with Suspected Abuse**

All staff should be alert to the likelihood of peer-on-peer abuse, particularly online sexual abuse. The school has a culture where all kinds of sexual harassment is recognised and addressed.

All staff will refer concerns to the designated safeguard lead as soon as possible. In the meantime, they will:

- listen to the pupil, keeping calm and offering reassurance
- not ask leading questions (ie ones that suggest the answer that is expected)
- accept what the pupil says without challenge
- not lay blame or criticise either the pupil or the perpetrator
- not promise confidentiality.

When abuse by another child is suspected, child protection procedures will be applied to both (alleged) abuser and abused. If appropriate, the disciplinary procedures will be invoked.

## **Dealing with Allegations of Abuse**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, a volunteer or another pupil, the person to whom the allegation is made will immediately inform the Head. The Head will, on all such occasions, discuss the content of the allegation with the appropriate local authorised person.

If an allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Head, the former will immediately inform the Chair of governors, who will consult with the designated safeguard lead.

In the event of allegations of abuse being made against a Head who is sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer at the local authority, although staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's DSL and make any referral through them.

The matter must remain strictly confidential until the Head (or Chair of governors), in conjunction with the local authority designated officer, has made an initial assessment and decided what steps are to be taken. A decision will be taken as to whether the suspicion or allegation is an internal disciplinary matter (in which case the disciplinary procedures will be followed) or whether there is a potential child protection issue (in which case the child protection procedures will be followed).

If it can be shown that an allegation is demonstrably false, it is not necessary to make a referral.

The school recognises its duty of care to its employees. Support for the individual is vital in fulfilling this duty. Unless there are objections from children's social care or the police, individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible, with an explanation of the likely course of action.

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher, another member of staff or a volunteer should be dealt with very quickly in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child, while supporting the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Parents and carers should be made aware of the requirement under s.141F of the Education Act 2002 to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers while investigations are ongoing.

Following an allegation, an individual might be suspended, but this should only happen if there is no reasonable alternative. It should not be the default position. A member of staff/volunteer against whom an allegation has been made would normally only be suspended in the following circumstances.

- A child or children would be at risk.
- The allegation is so serious that dismissal for gross misconduct is possible.
- It is necessary to allow any investigation to continue unimpeded.

### **Monitoring, Recording and Reporting**

Brief notes will be kept at the time of the incident or immediately after with the subsequent completion of a critical incident sheet. All records are copied to the designated person and comprise factual information and direct quotes from the pupil, rather than assumption or interpretation.

## **Inter-agency Liaison**

### **Social Care Meetings**

At times, staff will be called to participate in meetings organised and chaired by social care.

At these meetings, representatives from the school should be ready to report back providing information about

- attendance and punctuality
- academic achievement
- child's behaviour and attitude
- relationships with peer group and social skills generally
- child's appearance and readiness for school
- contact with parents/carers
- any specific incidents that need reporting.

### **Confidentiality**

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the investigative agencies. Members of staff should not promise confidentiality but can let the pupil know that only those who need to know will be informed and always for the pupil's own sake.

### **Physical Contact with Pupils**

Some form of physical contact with pupils by teachers is inevitable. All teachers should be aware of issues related to touching and the way in which this might be misconstrued. This relates particularly to any sensitive areas of the body.

Where any uncertainty exists, a senior member of staff should be consulted and one-to-one discussions with pupils should take place in rooms which are openly visible to other members of staff.

In the event of physical restraint, it is important that only the minimum amount is used in order to prevent the pupil from causing injury to themselves, others or property. Following such an intervention the critical incident form should be completed.

The majority of staff in school have had training in restraint. Where teachers or support staff do not, they should refer if possible to a member of staff who has.

## **Boarding Pupils**

There is a policy, known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and, if necessary, reporting any boarder who is missing from school and recording any incident, the action taken and the reasons given by the pupil for being missing.

Arrangements for alternative accommodation away from pupils will be made in cases where a member of boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Pupils**

[Insert name] is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage setting, and liaising with local statutory children's agencies.

The school will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after pupils at the setting (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed at the setting or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place at the setting, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. The school will inform Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days.

## **Reporting**

The school will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service, within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with children.

Failure to make a report constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the Department for Education's register.

## **Contact Details of the Local Agency Responsible for Child Protection**

The telephone number of the local agency responsible for child protection is:

### **Harrow**

**Telephone:** 020 8901 2690

**Email:** [Duty.Assess@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Duty.Assess@harrow.gov.uk)

**Out of Hours:** [020 8424 0999](tel:02084240999)

### **Brent**

**Office hours (Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm):** Call **020 8937 4300** (option 1)

**Outside office hours:** Call our emergency duty team on **020 8863 525**

**Ealing**

**Telephone:** 020 8825 8000

Date reviewed on: 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2024

Next Review Date: 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2025