

Centre Academy London
SAFEGUARDING
2016 ~ 17

Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Aim of policy:

To clearly define policy and procedure and, where appropriate, referral procedures relating to all Child Protection matters at the school. This policy is to be regarded as an integral part of Centre Academy Safeguarding documentation.

This policy has been authorised by the Governors, is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers, is available to parents on request and is published on the School website. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils even where this is away from the School, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit. This policy is drawn up in accordance to the latest guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2016', and the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'.

Personnel assigned to deal with Child Protection concerns:

Ms Natalia Ambridge – Designated Safeguarding Lead/Child Protection Officer
Head of School and Safeguarding Officer

Ms Zoe Parker – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Kathy Manners – Counsellor and Advisor to teachers and/or parents

External sources of reference

The direct point of initial referral for any concern raised by the School is to **Contact the Wandsworth LADO on: 020 8871 7208**
http://www.wandsworthpd.org.uk/cpd/content_detail.asp?contentid=758

Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead at Centre Academy London

The designated person of responsibility at the school has a duty to:

- Collate, hold and refer information (where necessary to the appropriate authority) relating to a student about whom concerns have been raised by a student, teacher or party external to the school, including parents
- Offer support and guidance to colleagues and staff who have access to students at the school. At Centre Academy, this includes passing on up-to-date and relevant information relating to CP issues, and providing training and guidance through INSET sessions
- To respond to training needs arising in the school, either as a result of new legislation, or in response to specific situations affecting one or more students at the school

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- To serve as a point of contact for parents, LAs and other agencies or parties external to the school

The Designated Lead:

- is appropriately trained
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of LSCB procedures
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, but kept separately from the child's general file
- refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedure
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a child with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the child's social worker is informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences in accordance with local procedure and guidance
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- makes this policy available to parents.

The role of the **Deputy Designated Member of Staff** at the school is to respond to and/or co-ordinate communication in the absence of the CPO

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the school community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving children in decision-making which affects them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in child's behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding all of the school's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact, e-safety plans and information-sharing

- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and governors will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the head teacher and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years.

Safer recruitment

The school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education: In Schools and Colleges* together with the school's individual procedures.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (from 2010 onwards)
- be interviewed.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own safeguarding and child protection training needs. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy.

Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect children we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent

- use only the child's first name or initials with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

E-Safety

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers at some time. However, we know that some men, women and young people may use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe in school. Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

For this reason, Centre Academy requires that each student hands in his/her mobile/iPad etc., to the Mentor at the start of the school day. These items are kept in a locked box during the day. Students may collect items at the end of the school day.

Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and children are not allowed to access these sites whilst in school. Some children will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home.

The school regularly holds e-safety lessons across all the classes. Staff undergo an NCPCC course entitled: *Keeping Children Safe Online*.

Whistleblowing

All staff are required to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead any concern or allegations about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm.

If workers bring information about a wrongdoing to the attention of their employers or a relevant organisation, they are protected in certain circumstances under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. This is commonly referred to as 'blowing the whistle'.

Qualifying disclosures are disclosures of information where the worker reasonably believes (and it is in the public interest) that one or more of the following matters is either happening, has taken place, or is likely to happen in the future.

- A criminal offence
- The breach of a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual

- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate attempt to conceal any of the above.

If a worker is going to make a disclosure it should be made to the employer first.

There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith. All staff are aware that anyone can make a referral.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Levels of concern and corresponding actions

All reported concerns will be treated with the utmost care and diligence, no matter how minor they may seem. Concerns brought to the attention of the named officer at Centre Academy will inform one of three school-specific actions which reflect the corresponding degree of urgency and gravity of concern:

Level one

Report or concern is not specific or evidence based. Child or young adult's immediate welfare and safety is not considered to be in danger. The concern may be logged and subject to review and/or no further action

Level two

There is more immediate concern for the welfare and safety of a child or young adult. Some action needs to be taken. External agency may be contacted for referral or advice. Parties connected with the individual concerned should be informed. Parents may/may not be contacted subject to the type of concern raised

Level three

The welfare, safety or health of the child or young adult is at immediate risk and requires action. This will almost certainly involve the advice/assistance of a local authority or appropriate agency. The matter may also need to be referred to the police. Medical assistance or advice may be sought, including accompanying the child or young adult to the hospital. This decision will rest with the Child Protection officer and Principal.

Guidelines for referral for concerned members of staff at the school

- For minor concerns, (Level one) there is a paperwork procedure in place. If emotional inconsistency or a sudden change in the temperament of a student is noted by a member of staff, the initial referral should be made to the mentor. This person will decide whether or not to refer to the CPO. The counsellor may be requested to see the student, or approached for general advice. Concerns that are general and not urgent should be logged and/or emailed to

other appropriate persons relevant to the student. The note should finally be passed to Natalia Ambridge, as Head of School and circulation should also have included the counsellor if appropriate

- For more immediate concerns (Level two or three), the matter should be brought to the attention of the CPO. Examples of concerns of this nature might include a visible injury (burn or bruise) and explanation inconsistent with injury. It might refer to something the student has said which causes concern, eg, that they have not been sleeping at home, or they are not being adequately cared for.
- In the absence of the Child Protection Officer urgent concerns should be directed to Zoe Parker. **Remember that any member of staff can refer to the authorities.** The message to teachers and staff is clear; **if in doubt, always refer.**

A log of Child Protection concerns, active and inactive, is held securely in the Head of School's office and not with the general pupil information.

Guidance

The following pages offer guidance to all teachers and members of staff at the school regarding the identification of possible Child Protection matters. A copy should be held by all teachers in their Teacher Handbook folder and also in the staff room and front office. This information has been drawn from a variety of sources. It contains:

- General guidelines for teachers and staff employed by Centre Academy
- Signs and symptoms of possible abuse (physical, neglect, psychological/emotional, sexual)
- Dealing with disclosure

Dealing with complaints about members of staff

Any teacher who hears an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the Head of School, unless the Head is the person against whom the allegation is made. Any allegations made against the Head should be reported to the Principal, Dr Duncan Rollo who acts on behalf of the Governing Body. The report should be directed **ONLY** to the attention of the persons named above; **the report or concern should not be directed to or at the person about whom the allegation is made.**

Physical contact with pupils

Whilst a degree of physical contact is often unavoidable (passing in corridors, exchanging books or items, coaching during PE or sessions of Occupational Therapy) it should be avoided where at all possible. In a school such as Centre Academy which accommodates a range of sensory, learning, communication and emotional difficulties, it is easy for physical contact to be misconstrued and misunderstood. It is vital that appropriate physical boundaries are observed at all times, both to assist in the student's understanding of the world, and protect the teacher against the possibility of complaint or accusation

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Exception to these rules may include the following:

- The prevention of injury or harm (ie, preventing a student from falling)
- Assisting if a student is ill
- Where physical contact is understood to be necessary to the current activity, such as role-play or game-playing

If a teacher has to physically restrain a pupil to prevent him or her causing injury to him or herself, to others or to property, no more than the minimum necessary force should be used. (See enclosed document on physical restraint.)

Confidentiality

Staff may not promise confidentiality when a student discloses any information. Staff have a professional responsibility to pass on or share relevant information concerning the protection of children with other professionals. If a child confides in a member of staff and requests the information is kept secret, the member of staff must tell the child sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer information on if the revelation is deemed a threat to health, safety or wellbeing. The child should be reassured that the matter will be disclosed only on a need-to-know basis.

Code of Practice for Child Protection at Centre Academy

- The Head of School as CPO is ultimately responsible for Child Protection at Centre Academy.
- If a member of staff observes an unusual pattern of behaviour developing or suspects abuse (physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect) observations should be recorded, signed and dated (see below). If a pupil makes a disclosure to a member of staff (teaching, administrative or support) the interview should be recorded factually, signed and dated. The information should be passed on to the Head of School who will then seek action or advice. Strict confidentiality is important at all times. Information about pupils must only be on a need to know basis and then kept confidential.
- The Head of School, Child Protection Officer and, if relevant, the counsellor will be made aware of any pupils on the Child Protection Register on a 'need to know' basis which respects confidentiality.

Dealing with Disclosures of Child Abuse

Receive

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Do not offer advice or give an opinion
- Accept what is being said.
- Take discreet notes – record exactly what the child has said – do not try to write in words what you *think* the child means

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only as far as is honest and reliable.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt if the pupil refers to it.
(For example, you could say “You are not to blame!”)

React

- Do not ask leading questions.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator.
- Do not ask the child to repeat for another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next.

Record

- Make brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy original notes.
- Record accurately.
- Draw a diagram to indicate position of bruising etc.

Remember

- Remember to follow the School’s procedures – refer immediately

Signs and Symptoms: Neglect

Definition: the persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child’s health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

(from: “Working Together under the Children Act – 1989”)

Specific indicators

- The child is always very hungry and requires food before the school day starts.
- The child, if not an independent traveller, is frequently picked up late after school.
- The child is seriously inadequately dressed for the weather.

Non-specific indicators or warning signs

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These include all of the above, but may be less pronounced to such an extent that you are uncertain.

- The child is exceedingly thin, or small for his/her age.
- The child frequently has sores or smells of urine.
- The child is frequently tired and needs to sleep during school hours.

These are also conditions which can occur because of a variety of medical causes.

Note:

With the exception of disclosure of abuse, no individual example is indicative of neglect.

A cluster of these examples may suggest that neglect should be suspected and a child protection referral made.

Children may be harmed by a parent, sibling, or other relative or friend, a carer, an acquaintance or a stranger. Children may also be the subject of institutional abuse through undue delay, lack of adequate planning, inappropriate use of resources and the inadequacy of appropriate skills and expertise.

The harm may be a result of a direct act or failure to proceed proper care, or both.

Signs and Symptoms: Physical Abuse

Definition: Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.*

*Where a carer invents or creates symptoms in a child in his or her charge typically, though not exclusively, to gain medical attention. (Professor R. Meadows – 1977)

Specific Indicators

- Disclosure by the child or by a third party
- Bruises
- Broken limbs
- Cigarette burns
- Cuts
- Weals
- Burns

Non-specific indicators

- Inexplicable physical fear
- Nerviness/ jumpiness
- Unwillingness to go home

- Bullying older children
- Inappropriate behaviour to other children
- Self abuse
- Sadistic behaviour

Note:

With the exception of disclosure of abuse, or certain serious injuries, no individual example is indicative of physical abuse. A cluster of these examples may suggest that physical abuse should be suspected and a child protection referral should be made.

Children may be harmed by a parent, sibling, or other relative or friend, a carer, an acquaintance or a stranger. Children may also be the subject of institutional abuse through the undue delay, lack of adequate planning, inappropriate use of resources and the inadequacy of appropriate skills and expertise.

The harm may be the result of a direct act or a failure to proceed with proper care or both.

Signs and Symptoms: Sexual Abuse

Definition: Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent, and or/ developmentally immature (from “Working Together under the Children Act – 1989”)

Specific indicators

- Disclosure by a child or a third party
- Injuries to the genital area
- Awareness of sexual behaviour inappropriate to age, as indicated in the child’s drawings, play or talk, or by excessive masturbation.
- Suicide attempt
- Excessive sexual behaviour, giving clear evidence of an awareness of sexual behaviour, or a sexual assault on another child/adult.

Non-specific indicators

- Sudden behavioural changes e.g. falling standards, truancy, etc
- Lack of trust in adults / fear of a particular individual
- Withdrawal and introversion
- Problems with peer relationships
- Running away from home
- Frequent unexplained stomach pains vomiting
- Girls taking over the mothering role
- Reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for games

- Low self esteem / the ‘model child’
- Stealing
- Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Compulsive masturbation
- Bruises, scratches, bite marks
- Display of sexual knowledge beyond child’s years
- Sexual drawings
- Fear of school medical examinations
- Developmental regression
- Over-sexualised behaviour
- Depression / or suicide attempts
- Anorexia Nervosa / eating disorder or change of eating habits
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Pregnancy, particularly when reluctant to name the father
- Recurring urinary tract problem
- Vaginal infections or genital damage
- Venereal disease

Note:

With the exception of disclosure of abuse, no individual example is indicative of sexual abuse. A cluster of these examples may suggest that sexual abuse should be suspected and a child protection referral should be made.

Signs and Symptoms: Emotional Abuse

Definition: actual or likely severe adverse effect in the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. (from “Working Together under the Children Act – 1989”)

Specific indicators:

- Disclosure of a damaging experience, such as being locked in a cupboard
- Living with a parent or carer who is severely or constantly intoxicated by alcohol or drugs

The following are also emotionally abusive:

- Racial and sexual harassment
- Terrorising groups
- Extortion
- Press-ganging and delinquency
- Bullying – physical or verbal

Non-specific indicators

- Often, it is the child who presents no behaviour problem, is quiet and withdrawn who may be experiencing emotional abuse.

- Frequently crying, hypersensitive to criticism
- Acute anxiety, may be accompanied by weeping or inability to concentrate
- Severe difficulties in relationships, including isolation, rejection by peers, excessive clinging to adults
- Severely depressed mood – including a lack of humour or enjoyment
- Self abuse / self mutilation
- Excessive eating or anorexia
- Rejection of relationships
- Sadistic behaviour

NB: Staff need to be aware that many dyslexic pupils entering this school present with some of these indicators due to their experiences in previous schools. If problems are prolonged further discussion should take place with the Head of School.

Note:

With the exception of disclosure of abuse, no individual example is indicative of emotional abuse. A cluster of these examples may suggest that emotional abuse should be suspected and a child protection referral should be made.

Children may be harmed by a parent, sibling, or other relative or friend, a carer, an acquaintance or a stranger. Children may also be the subject of institutional abuse through undue delay, lack of adequate planning, inappropriate use of resources and the inadequacy of appropriate skills and expertise.

Identifying cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is prohibited by law in England, Scotland and Wales, whether it is committed against a United Kingdom national or permanent United Kingdom resident in the UK or abroad. FGM is an abuse of the human rights of girls and women and therefore a child protection issue.

Any disclosure, indication or suspicion that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be immediately reported to the CPO who will ring, without delay, for advice to the Wandsworth Safeguarding Team.

In support of this provision, the school will do everything it can to ensure: that:

- the school creates an ‘open door’ culture where students feel able to discuss issues without prejudice
- Materials explaining FGM are available for staff and students
- Advice and notices are available for accessing additional help, e.g. Childline, NSPCC
- Training about FGM is incorporated in the school’s Safeguarding Training.

Bullying

Please read in conjunction with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

Bullying can take place in different ways and happens to lots of people.

Bullying is any behaviour which someone thinks is intending to hurt, intimidate, frighten, harm or exclude them or anyone else. It is usually something that happens over and over again and can leave the targeted individual feeling defenceless.

Some of the ways bullying can happen are:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Cyber bullying
- Racist
- Homophobic

Centre Academy has a zero tolerance of bullying. All instances of bullying are to be recorded and brought to the Head of School's attention on the same day. Any allegation of bullying will be formally investigated and dealt with appropriately.

Child Protection

Actions to be considered by the Child Protection Officer:

- Arrange for urgent medical treatment if necessary. This can be given by a first-aider or the local doctor or hospital.
- Do not discuss your concerns with the parents where it is thought that a child may be at risk of further harm or in the initial stages of a child's sexual abuse referral.
- Contact Social Services Assessment and Investigation Team, Safeguarding or the Advisory Officer for Child Protection for advice.
- Fill in referral form, if applicable, and send copies as directed.
- Send to Social Services a written report, giving the date and time the incident was first noted
- Record accurate, contemporaneous notes on observation, events and action taken. Sign and date the notes.
- Be available/arrange for relevant school staff to be available to attend Case Conferences and/or Strategy Meetings arranged by Social Services.
- Keep Child Protection notes separate from the child's educational records. They must be held in a confidential file.

Signed: N. Ambridge

Date: 30.8.16

Head of School

