



Sharm International British School

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Adopted: Autumn 2012

Last amended: Autumn 2014

To be reviewed: Autumn 2015

To be read in conjunction with the Anti Bullying Policy

THE PHILOSOPHY

- Some teachers are cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau before coming into contact with children. Others with direct 1:1 contact with children shall have an enhanced CRB check or equivalent where possible. Where this cannot be obtained, they will work under supervision.
- We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. At all times and in all cases the first priority must be the safety and welfare of the child. All staff, therefore, must be aware of, and immediately act upon, any form of suspected or actual child abuse including all allegations. The procedures to be followed are those described by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). The person in charge of Child Protection in the school, including EYFS, is the Head (Mrs Karen McNeely), with the EY Leader (Mrs Helen Ragab) being the second designated senior person.
- The safeguarding of the child must in all cases override requests from third parties for information to be kept confidential. This includes requests from the child him/herself.
- Inter-agency procedures must be brought into action at the earliest possible stage and in respect of every allegation, including those made against strangers, whether the child is living at home, with foster parents, in residential care or in any situation.
- In cases where a member of staff leaves the school due to being deemed unsuitable to work with children, ISA, GTC and DCSF at Darlington will be informed within 28 days.

Objectives

Staff should try to ensure that they are not placed in a vulnerable situation with children, putting themselves at potential risk of accusations of abuse, e.g.

- When working on a 1:1 basis with individual children.
- Whilst children are changing for sport
- Whilst transporting children to / from fixtures in private vehicles.
- When cleaning up after "accidents."

Staff should not engage in personal e-mailing to children or parents or enter into any Social Networks, for example, Facebook and Twitter or any type of friendship groups.

Staff should use common sense to protect themselves wherever possible:

- Keep doors ajar when not in the presence of a TA or other adult
- Do not enter changing rooms unaccompanied if only one child is present –
- Call for a Lunch Supervisor or TA if personal hygiene issues are involved.
- All staff and governors should have an understanding of child abuse and their responsibilities in that regard.
- Training in Child Protection for all staff will be undertaken every year.
- Abuse in all its forms will not be tolerated.
- Clear procedures for reporting abuse should be understood and followed.

Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

Note: it must be remembered that sometimes children abuse other children.

- **Physical Abuse.**
Where a child is physically hurt. It can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also involves giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. Physical abuse can leave signs – Look out for children with frequent bruising, burns, fractures and cuts - all without reasonable explanation of cause.
- **Sexual Abuse.**
When children are exploited sexually by adults who use them to meet their own sexual needs. It includes sexual intercourse, fondling, masturbation, oral sex and exposing children to pornographic materials. Children who have been sexually abused often become depressed and withdrawn, display unusually aggressive behaviour, may have eating problems and relationships with adults that exclude others. They may display over-sexualised behaviour inappropriate for their age.
- **Neglect.**
Where parents fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children - like food, clothes, warmth and medical care. Leaving children alone is another form of neglect. Children who have been neglected suffer a number of difficulties, they may seem unusually withdrawn and miserable, they may be over-aggressive, have eating and nutrition problems and be dirty and smelly.
- **Emotional Abuse.**
Where a child consistently faces a lack of love and affection, or is continually threatened by verbal attacks, taunting and shouting. Children who have been emotionally abused may seem sad, cry a lot and display apathetic or aggressive behaviour. They may well have a lack of confidence and low self-esteem.

Suspected Abuse - Listening and Talking to Children.

Staff must never, when in discussions with a child, or at any time, suggest or induce explanations for the suspected or actual child abuse. Nor must they, when in discussions with a child, or at any other time, promise to keep secret any information disclosed to them.

Talking to children is a skill most teachers have in abundance, but being faced with an abused and distressed child can undermine the most experienced professional.

- Whether listening to a disclosure of sexual abuse or asking a child about an injury, it is important to facilitate the child talking about what has been happening

- The child may feel confused, depressed, guilty or frightened and may be very relieved to tell someone what has been happening. You need to let the child tell their story in their own time.
- Head to be contacted immediately
- Appropriate time should be allowed for following through the reporting procedure immediately afterwards.

It is important not to make the child's bad feelings worse and to keep to a minimum the number of times he/she is asked to repeat the story. It is inappropriate to enquire into the details of the abuse as this may distress the child, and should be left to an interviewer skilled in asking such questions.

It is important to remember:

- Take what the child says seriously
- React calmly because over-reacting can frighten the child and compound the feelings of guilt.
- Tell the child they are not to blame. Children often feel guilty.
- Explain to the child what will happen next.
- Check out your understanding with the child of what has happened, if you are not clear what the child is telling you.
- Keep questions to a minimum and never lead the child, as leading questions may invalidate the child's testimony in court.
- Use the words the child uses (e.g. for different parts of the body) if the child is reluctant to use the words themselves, or speak at all.

When talking to children who may have been abused, you need to strike a balance between gathering enough information to establish whether or not there is cause for concern and undertaking an investigation interview which is the responsibility of the investigating agency. Inform the Head immediately.

Listening and Talking to Parents.

While parents must take responsibility for their actions, being punitive towards parents who have abused or who are suspected of abusing their children is unhelpful and can be harmful to the child. Treating parents with respect and understanding will help parents overcome their difficulties.

Parents react in many different ways when they hear that their child is suspected of being abused. They can feel angry, threatened, indignant, depressed, ashamed or guilty, and it is understandable that people have strong feelings in such circumstances.

When talking to parents who may be highly emotional, it is helpful to:

- ◆ Meet parents with the Head
- ◆ Be open and honest with parents and tell them the reasons for your concern.
- ◆ Avoid losing your temper or sounding punitive.
- ◆ Explain to parents that it is your duty as a teacher to report cases of suspected child abuse. It may be helpful to outline to them the child abuse procedures, so that they are aware of the professional guidelines.
- ◆ Make a written record of the meeting while it is still clear in your mind

You will need to know what is going on in a child's life (especially during such a time of crisis) so that you can respond appropriately to the child's needs. It is important to avoid asking the child further questions during this period. This may be upsetting for the child and contaminate available evidence.

Prevention

The school is aware of possible accidental exposure to undesirable material on the Internet. Please refer to Internet Policy.

As a 'telling school' SIBS will use the KIDSCAPE Child Protection Programmes to teach pupils practical ways of staying safe from strangers, from abuse by people they know and from bullies. We will also continue to work in partnership with our parents to further promote all the attributes of a caring, professional, friendly and safe environment.