



IBSTOCK PLACE SCHOOL

# Child Protection Policy

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### Scope

1. This policy applies to all pupils and staff at Ibstock Place School. It is available to the wider community on the School's Website.

### Introduction

2. The School acts in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:
  - The Children Act 1989 and 2004
  - Education Act 2002, section 175
  - Wandsworth Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
  - DfES guidance "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" 2006 (see *IPS Recruitment, selection and disclosure policy and procedure*)
  - HM Government "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2006
  - *IPS Lost and Missing Children Policies*

### Aims

3. The aims of this policy are:
  - To provide an environment and foster a school community supportive of the aims of Ibstock Place School
  - To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
  - To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm
  - To develop a structured procedure within the school to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse
  - To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care Services

- To ensure that all adults within the school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff

## **Procedures**

4. The Ibstock Place School procedures for safeguarding children are in line with Wandsworth Local Education Authority (LEA) and the LSCB procedures. The School will ensure that:

- The Designated Senior Person is the Senior Tutor, who takes regular training with Wandsworth LEA
- The member of staff who will act in the DSP's absence is the Headmistress
- The Head of Priestman House takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting. See further information in *EYFS – The Care of our Pupils* document.
- The designated governor is Mr Michael Gibbins
- The staff are trained to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- The staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
- All parents are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures
- Procedures are regularly reviewed and updated
- The Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy
- All new members of staff are provided with a copy of the child protection procedures as part of their induction into the School and are made aware of the role of the Designated Senior Person

## **Responsibilities**

5. It is the role of the senior managers to take responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This responsibility requires:

- Having effective recruitment procedures, including checking all new staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people
- Having procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- Making sure that the staff receive appropriate training
- Having clearly understood working procedures on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people
- Educating parents on the School's 'Duty of Care'

- Ensuring that children receive appropriate and timely preventative interventions when required
  - Notifying the DCSF of the name of any member of staff considered to be “unsuitable to work with children in accordance with statutory regulations
6. Arrangements for Safeguarding apply for all overnight visits, trips and clubs.
7. The Designated Senior Person (DSP) has the following responsibilities to:
- Ensure that the School operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance from the LSCB and Wandsworth LEA
  - Ensure that the School effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns
  - Keep written, confidential records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral
  - Ensure that the Headmistress is kept fully informed of any concerns
  - Report a disclosure of abuse or suspicion of abuse to Social Services within 24 hours.
  - Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) covering the child’s residence (contact details are given in the Appendix to this policy).
  - Monitor register attendance and absences for all pupils; inform Social Services if a child is absent without explanation for two days and subject to a Child Protection Plan
  - Submit reports to and attend child protection conferences if necessary
  - Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff
  - Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
  - Liaise with Social Care teams over suspected cases of child abuse
  - Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support
8. Safeguarding practice at Istock Place School as reported to the Governing Body is in line with the requirements of “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” (DfES 2006).
9. The anonymity of the child concerned must be protected and discretion should be used to avoid the identification of individuals.

## **Training**

10. Summary of Child Protection Training:
- Designated Senior Persons must undertake training every two years
  - Teaching and other staff should have training updated every three years

## **Definition of abuse and neglect**

11. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
12. *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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
13. *Emotional abuse* is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
14. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
15. *Sexual abuse* involves forcing or inciting a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
16. *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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
  - Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
  - Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
  - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
  - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
  - It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Concerns

17. All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he or she:
  - Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with

an accidental injury

- Regularly has unexplained injuries
- Frequently has some injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given)
- Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and / or inappropriate to his or her age / stage of development
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed
- In addition, any other cause for believing that a child may be suffering harm should be reported

### **Dealing with a disclosure**

18. If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, rather than ask direct or leading questions
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record and keep separate from the Main File
- Pass information to the Designated Senior Person without delay
- Accept what the child says and report to the Designated Senior Person for follow up

19. General points on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse:

- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell

- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen

20. Helpful things to say:

- I understand what you are saying
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

21. Things not to say:

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

22. At the end of the conversation:

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Contact the appropriate senior member of staff or agency
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed

23. Upon receipt of a report of abuse of a pupil by an adult or another child/other children, the DSP will:

- If a child is in immediate danger call 999
- Consult with the Headmistress concerning the most appropriate course of action
- If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Designated Persons may consult with the LADO or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay.
- If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Person will confirm the referral in writing to SSD within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Person will contact Children's Specialist Services (formerly Social Services) again.

## **Record keeping**

24. When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
- Give all records to the Designated Senior Person promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer
- All documentation relating to child protection issues are secured in the Headmistress' office

## **Support following a disclosure**

25. Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff or volunteer should discuss this with the Designated Senior Person and Headmistress.

26. The School will endeavour to support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence 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

## **Confidentiality**

27. All matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.

- The Headmistress or Designated Senior Person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only
- Confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil giving evidence
- 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

## **Whistle blowing**

28. It is recognised that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. The School will ensure that all staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to the Designated Senior Person, the Headmistress or the Chairman of the Governing Body.

### **Appointment and dismissal of staff**

29. School procedures for appointing staff are in line with the “Child Protection: Essential Guidance for Education staff; Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and selection in Education Settings” (DfES 2005) and the LSCB procedures. These will be reviewed regularly in the light of new legislation and guidance.
30. The appointment process is designed to deter potential offenders from applying. All applicants are required to complete application forms that are designed to prompt interviewers to spot frequent job changes and movement around the country. They state the primacy of child protection concerns at the school and require a declaration of past convictions.
31. References are taken up in advance, and interviews include a question regarding child protection issues.
32. All applicants who are offered employment in posts involving access to children (whether teachers or support staff) are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure before the appointment is confirmed. Other adults who may come into direct contact with pupils as part of their business with the school or on an infrequent basis (coach drivers, parents helping on trips) are subject to an appropriate check which may include a CRB Disclosure.
33. Any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies in line with DCSF guidance.
34. Within one month of their leaving the School, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she was considered unsuitable to work with children, will be reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Referrals are made to PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA, (tel 0300 123 1111).

### **Allegations involving school staff**

35. With regard to allegations made against staff:
  - All School staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child
  - All staff should be aware of the school’s *Behaviour Management Policy*
  - If a pupil or parent makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must immediately inform the Headmistress. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including details of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation

- The Headmistress will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements but assess whether it is necessary to refer the matter to Social Care in accordance with the Safeguarding procedures. In doing so, the Headmistress will consult with relevant agencies
- If the Headmistress decides that the allegation warrants further action through Safeguarding procedures she must make a referral direct to the local Social Care team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence, it will be necessary to contact Social Care before informing the member of staff
- Careful consideration needs to be given to the suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made. Any suspension is seen as a neutral action and does not predict the outcome of any disciplinary process. The Chairman of the Governing Body will be consulted before a final decision is made
- If it is decided that this is not necessary to refer the matter to Social Care the Headmistress will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation
- If the complaint made to a member of staff concerns the Headmistress, the person receiving the complaint will immediately inform the Chairman of the Governing Body who will follow the procedures above without first notifying the Headmistress

### **Physical intervention**

36. With regard to situations requiring physical intervention by staff:

- The School has a separate *Physical Intervention Policy*
- It 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
- If the physical intervention is of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child it may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures
- Staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. Appropriate in-service training will be arranged

### **Bullying**

37. The School has a separate *Anti-bullying Policy*. It acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to issues under safeguarding procedures.

### **Racist comments**

38. Racist comments will not be tolerated and are subject to the School's *Anti-bullying Policy*. Repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under Safeguarding procedures.

## **Inappropriate relationships**

39. Under no circumstances should inappropriate relationships be encouraged between adults and children. Staff should be aware that the Sexual Offences Act 2003 created a new criminal offence of abuse of trust and a new offence of meeting a child following sexual grooming.
40. Where a member of staff is concerned that a pupil has developed an attachment to him or her, it should be reported to the Designated Senior Person. Social exchanges with the pupil which are in any way different from those of the rest of their peers should be discouraged.
41. Staff should at all times have regard for their professional responsibilities and for their conduct to ensure that they uphold the letter and spirit of this policy in safeguarding children.

## **Staff working alone with children**

42. The following guidelines should be considered by staff:
  - Let another member of staff know that they are alone with a child
  - Keep the door open to the room that they are in or ensure they are in a room with an uncovered glass panel in the door
  - If this is a regular occurrence (such as regular individual music lessons), the child's parent/carer should be informed of the situation
  - Should anything happen during the session that makes the staff member uncomfortable, this should be reported to the Designated Senior Person immediately
  - Children should only be given lifts in cars with the express permission of either the pupils' parents, Designated Senior Person or the Headmistress.

## **Curriculum links / prevention**

43. This policy lives within the day-to-day operation of the School.
  - The pastoral care system, House system, Assemblies, Tutorial Programme and other pastoral activities facilitate a supportive school community
  - There is a strong ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to
  - All children know there is a nurse or teacher in the School whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
  - Curriculum opportunities are included which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help both whilst at school and in the future

## **Health and Safety and educational visits**

44. This policy applies to situations outside normal school hours and when pupils are involved in School activities off site.

- The school places great significance on the protection of children within the school environment as reflected in the *Health and Safety Policy*. This is extended when pupils are away from the school undertaking school trips and visits by the *Educational Trips and Visits Policy*. All trips are reviewed after the event to see if there are any changes necessary
- The Bursar seeks to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on the school site at any time

### **Review and verification**

45. This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Part of this review relates to the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. Any deficiencies in our child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

Dr Adrian Johnson  
Senior Tutor

Mr Michael Gibbins  
Chairman of the Governing Body

14 December, 2009

Date of next review: 14 December, 2010

## Appendix

If the child is “at risk” call Children’s Specialist Services:

- Wandsworth  
Initial Response Team, Tel: 020-8871-6622 (9am – 5pm)  
Out-of-Hours Tel: 020-8871-6000 (after 5pm, weekends)  
If Out-of-Hours assistance is foreseen before 5pm Tel: 020-8871-7405
- Richmond  
Initial Response Team, Tel: 020-8891-7969  
Out-of-Hours Tel: 020-8744-2442

For advice on the course of action to take:

- Wandsworth  
Duty Manager, Tel: 020-8871-8646)
- Richmond  
Children in need team, Tel: 020-8891-7969