



## LYDGATE INFANT SCHOOL

### Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

(June 2024)

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, health and guidance by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance.

This policy has been developed with close reference to the requirements outlined in the DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe In Education' (KCSIE: September 2023).

Lydgate Infant School fully recognises the contribution it must make to protect children and support pupils in school. As a maintained school, the school follows all the procedures and policies detailed on Sheffield City Council's Safeguarding Sheffield Children website. Hard copies of these (reviewed annually) are kept in the Headteacher's/DSL's office, the Staffroom and on the Visitor Sign-In Desk.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy:

- **Prevention:**  
(through, for example, a positive school atmosphere and ethos; Learning for Life curricular input; pastoral support to pupils)
- **Protection:**  
(By following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns)
- **Support:**  
(To pupils, school staff and to children who may have been abused)

This policy applies to all staff, whether teaching or non-teaching, full- or part-time, volunteers and students on placement.

#### **SCHOOL COMMITMENT**

We recognise that for children, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship ('Learning for Life' skills),

which help equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.

- Include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of later life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

## **FRAMEWORK**

Schools do not operate in isolation. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB). The guidance containing this framework is followed in all cases.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children. There are however key staff within school and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures. The names of those undertaking these responsibilities for the current year are:

DSL: Headteacher, Mr Dewi Bromage  
Deputy DSL(s): Deputy Headteacher, Miss Alexis Moon  
SENCo, Miss Nicola Leyshon

Their responsibilities include:

- Responding to concerns
- Dealing with referrals
- Attending Child Protection conferences
- Liaising with other institutions
- Giving advice to colleagues
- Organising/conducting in-service training

These members of staff comprise the school's Safeguarding Team.

There is a nominated governor/s who monitors and oversees this area of school life. The named Safeguarding Governor/s attends at least one Safeguarding Team meeting per term. Confidentiality is always maintained at Safeguarding Team meetings.

Safeguarding Governor (s):

Mrs Sarah Williams  
Mrs Camille Barker

A Local Authority contact is available through Sheffield Safeguarding Hub to give advice and guidance, and can be contacted on 0114 273 4855.

## **PROCEDURES**

- The school follows the procedures set out in the guidance produced by the Sheffield Area Child Protection Committee.
- At the start of each academic year, as part of the first INSET day's provision, all staff are re-appraised of the school's Child Protection procedures. Staff recruited in-year receive a Safeguarding Induction at which the school's Child Protection procedures are communicated, and relevant staff identified.
- A brief document summarising the school's Child Protection procedures and identifying relevant staff is maintained in the main office, and is distributed to all supply and other staff or parent/carer visitors to the school.
- The school's prospectus informs parents and carers of the school's duties and responsibilities in the area of Safeguarding.
- The nominated Safeguarding Governor/s are kept informed of Safeguarding and Child Protection matters through termly discussion with the school's Safeguarding Team.
- The school prepares an annual Safeguarding/Child Protection report for submission to the Local Authority at the end of each academic year.

## **HOW TO REPORT A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN**

- Contact the DSL as soon as possible. A delay can significantly hinder the response of other agencies. If the DSL is unavailable, contact the Deputy DSL who will then follow appropriate procedures.
- Do not interrogate or ask the child leading questions, but do make simple enquiries and record in detail, via CPOMS. Include the circumstances, date and time when the information was received.
- Do not contact parents or carers.
- Report all disclosures, no matter how insignificant they may appear. The child involved may have a Key Worker who will be contacted.
- If a pupil demonstrates that they will only confide in their class teacher then immediate help should be sought in order to supervise the class to allow this to happen.
- If a disclosure or allegation is made about the Headteacher, the matter should be reported to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Sarah Williams, who will liaise with relevant contacts within the Local Authority.

Please note that this policy has been developed with reference to the DfE document 'Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers' (June 2018), which updates information sharing requirements to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR 2018) and Data Protection Act (2018).

## **TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

Lydgate Infant School will ensure that the Headteacher (DSL) and Deputy DSLs and the nominated governor for Child Protection attend training relevant to their role in a timely fashion. Staff will receive training as appropriate, again in accordance with statutory guidelines.

## **PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.
- Staff will be aware that they can never guarantee confidentiality to a child and that the member of staff must convey to the child that they have to inform the DSL of any disclosure, who may then need to contact other people about the issue.
- The class teacher will be informed that there are concerns about a child in their class, but confidentiality will be maintained.

## **RECORDS AND MONITORING**

- Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Lydgate Infant School is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within the school, the status of such records and the process regarding the transfer of such records and information to other agencies/settings.
- Factual observations only will be recorded without embellishment.
- When an issue is raised, the person raising the concern will be expected to make a record of the concern utilising CPOMS. The DSL will record follow-up details and update CPOMS as a result.
- Children who have been identified as 'At Risk' will be monitored in terms of their progress and clear records will be maintained.
- These records will be shared with the Local Authority's Child Protection Co-ordinator if requested or Social Services if a referral is made.

## **ATTENDANCES AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES**

Where necessary, the DSL or Deputy DSL will attend a Child Protection Conference. When whole staff training takes place, staff will be briefed as to the purpose and procedure of these conferences. They will also receive advice on how to produce relevant, concise and professional reports. If the school has made a referral, the DSL will support staff to maintain a working relationship with parents and carers throughout the process.

## **SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK**

Lydgate Infant School recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of worth and to view the world in a positive way. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant and there may even be reason to consider fixed or permanent exclusion from the school. It is also recognized that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in

order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. The school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school's 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 the school's behaviour policy.
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents and carers, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies within the school, including:

- Behaviour & Anti-Bullying
- Health & Safety
- Positive Handling
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional issues will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

### **SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF**

- Members of staff are advised never to put themselves in a vulnerable position where an allegation can be made against them. If necessary, the DSL will accompany the member of staff when talking to a child.
- Criminal Disclosure checks are now standard practice in helping to ensure that 'safe' staff are recruited into school, with other employment checks undertaken in consultation with the school's HR Partner.
- As part of the above, all school staff participate in a process to satisfy the school's safeguarding obligations under the Childcare Disqualifications Regulations 2018 with regard to early years and later years childcare duties. It is noted that the most recent iteration of this document (31 August 2018) confirmed the removal of disqualification

by association in non-domestic settings, therefore placing school-based staff outside the scope of disqualification by association.

- During recruitment exercises, at least one member of the recruitment panel will be trained in Safer Recruitment strategies.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **RECOGNISING SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE**

It is important to note that these lists are only possible indicators of abuse. Many of these signs could have other explanations.

Some of the characteristic signs of abuse are the same so there will be duplications on the lists provided. Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognize that something is wrong. The possibilities of abuse should be investigated if a child shows one or more of these symptoms, or any one of them to a marked degree.

#### **SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parent or carers being contacted
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggressiveness towards others
- Running away

#### **SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

#### **SIGNS OF NEGLECT**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene

Constant tiredness  
Poor state of clothing  
Emaciation  
Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school  
Untreated medical problems  
Destructive tendencies  
Low self-esteem  
Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)  
Lack of social relationships  
Running away  
Compulsive stealing or scavenging

### **SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance  
Displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age  
Tendency to cling or in need of constant reassurance  
Tendency to cry easily  
Regression to younger behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking, acting like a baby, playing with discarded toys  
Complaints of genital itching or pain  
Distrust of a familiar adult, anxiety about being left with a relative, baby-sitter or lodger  
Unexplained gifts or money  
Depression and withdrawal  
Apparent secrecy  
Wetting, day or night  
Sleep disturbances or nightmares  
Chronic illnesses, especially throat infections and venereal disease  
Anorexia or bulimia  
Self-mutilation, attempted suicide, frequently running away  
Unexplained pregnancy  
Fear of undressing for PE  
Phobias or panic attacks

Not all sexually abused children will exhibit clear signs of disturbance. Some will be model pupils, displaying none of the characteristic effects of sexual abuse.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THESE LISTS ARE ONLY POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF ABUSE. MANY OF THESE SIGNS COULD HAVE OTHER EXPLANATIONS.**

(Taken from 'Kidscape' by Michelle Elliott)