



St. Helen's School Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

1. RATIONALE

The Education Act 2002 Section 175 establishes Child Protection work within education as a statutory duty. All schools have a statutory responsibility to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of their pupils. There is, therefore, a need for procedures both for detecting and preventing abuse and for ensuring that all staff are aware of the school's role in this respect.

The school, through the Governing Council, Head and staff is responsible for providing a safe environment for children, both pupils and other under-18s visiting the school for any purpose. This involves both the physical and cultural environments and reference should be made to other school policies including;

- physical security of the premises
- health and safety
- proper checking of all staff and volunteers
- use of the Internet, photographs and mobile phones
- bullying
- after school clubs
- premises lettings
- school trips

2. OBJECTIVES

The school aims in this policy:

- 2.1 To provide pupils with relevant information, skills and attitudes to help them to understand abuse, resist advances and prepare them for the responsibilities of adult life including the importance of a safe and secure home and family life
- 2.2 To enable pupils to feel confident they can confide in staff on issues of neglect, abuse and deprivation
- 2.3 To ensure that members of staff are familiar and confident with the appropriate Child Protection procedures and issues
- 2.4 To give clear guidance to all staff, teaching & non-teaching on:
 - i) indicators of possible abuse
 - ii) procedures to follow if a child discloses abuse
 - iii) procedures to follow if a member of staff suspects abuse
- 2.5 To work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and a recognition that this may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure
- 2.6 To monitor and support pupils who have been identified as 'at risk'

- 2.7 To contribute to an inter-agency approach to Child Protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies
- 2.8 To continually review the school procedures and improve the way Child Protection issues are managed

3. SUCCESS CRITERIA

The policy will be deemed to be successful if:

- 3.1 There is an increased awareness by staff of their role in Child Protection
- 3.2 Reasonable suspicions are reported quickly to either Mary Morris, Head, or to Paul Tiley, Deputy Head, who are the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection. Within the EYFS setting, the Designated Person is Joanna Chaventre, Head of Little St. Helen's, who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding matters in consultation with Mary Morris and Paul Tiley
- 3.3 Concerns are dealt with sensitively and efficiently

4. METHODOLOGY

The procedures to implement this policy are embedded in the curriculum of the school. Awareness of the issues involved by pupils, staff, Governors and parents is of paramount importance.

4.1 Pupil awareness

- i) The Code of Conduct encourages all pupils to treat each other and staff with respect
- ii) The curriculum and especially the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme delivers appropriate skills and information (e.g. personal safety)
- iii) The school has an environment and ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and they are listened to
- iv) Pupils are given opportunities to understand and develop strategies for coping with stress
- v) Pupils are given the opportunity to learn about relationships, child development and good parenting

Staff awareness

- i) At least one of the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) has received training at two yearly intervals in Child Protection and inter-agency working to the standards agreed by the London Safeguarding Children Board to keep his/her knowledge and skills up to date. The Designated Person for the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre, has also received such training at two yearly intervals
- ii) Child Protection training is provided for all staff at three yearly intervals to ensure that their skills and expertise are up to date. Training focuses on the recognition of the indicators of child abuse, the procedures and case studies
- iii) All staff undergo initial training in Child Protection during the induction programme for new staff
- iv) All staff must read and ensure they are familiar with the contents of this policy as stipulated in the Staff Handbook
- v) Staff are encouraged to be available to pupils to provide support and guidance so that there are appropriate adults whom pupils feel confident to approach
- vi) The curriculum raises pupils' awareness and builds confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others
- vii) Staff treat pupils with respect

viii) Staff are aware that they are role models to pupils

4.3 Governor awareness

- i) Governors are responsible for ensuring that there is a safe school environment
- ii) Governors have a duty to ensure the school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities
- iii) Governors have a responsibility to annually monitor and review safeguarding policies, practices and procedures
- iv) There will be a Governor specifically responsible for Child Protection

4.4 Parental awareness

Parents/guardians are informed by publishing a statement in the school prospectus that the staff are required by law to follow the procedures laid down by the London Safeguarding Children Board. The statement reads as follows:

- i) "The school is committed to promoting the health and welfare of all pupils and if staff have a reasonable suspicion that a pupil may have been the victim of abuse, staff will (as is required by law) follow the procedures laid down by the London Safeguarding Children Board. Such action in no way infers that any parent/guardian or other individual is being accused of wrongdoing. A full version of the school's Child Protection Policy is available on the school website."

4.5 Administration

- i) Pupil records are kept in a secure location. Clear records of pupils' progress and factors that influence this are kept on file
- ii) Clear policies and procedures on confidentiality are observed, using 'yellow pupil information forms', which may be needed to provide information to other professionals
- iii) The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) will submit reports to case conferences and attend case conferences if necessary
- iv) The Child Protection Procedures and Systems of the London Safeguarding Children Board are observed. Referrals to local social services of allegations or suspicions of abuse are to be made within 24 hours.

4.6 Monitoring

Effective monitoring of Child Protection Procedures is dependent upon the maintenance of accurate and up to date records. The criteria by which the monitoring of the Child Protection Procedures and Policy is undertaken are described below:

Parents

1. Any pertinent feedback from parents/guardians

Pupils

1. Any pertinent feedback from pupils
2. The number of referrals made by staff to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley)
3. The number of referrals made by the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) to Social Services

Staff

1. Involvement by all staff in INSET courses relating to Child Protection issues
2. The amounts of the budget allocated to training for Child Protection issues
3. Reference to the aims of this policy when curricular planning occurs

Governors

1. Annual review of Child Protection Policies and Procedures and how they have been discharged

5. EVALUATION

The Head and Deputy Heads will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of this policy by:

- 5.1 Evaluating the procedures in the light of incidents reported
- 5.2 Evaluating the training given to staff in INSET and initial training
- 5.3 Evaluating, with the Heads of Section, the PSHCE programme
- 5.4 Evaluating, with the Heads of Department, the Schemes of Work
- 5.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct with an input from School Council

6. REVIEW

This policy, together with the procedures and advice contained within it, will be reviewed annually by the Head and Deputy Heads and presented to the Governing Council for review. It is regularly updated so that the school complies with the latest legislation and good practice and so that any deficiencies are remedied without delay. Currently it is consistent with and so reinforces:

- Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 2002 Section 175
- Every Child Matters 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Children in Education: Guidance about Child Protection Arrangements for the Education Service (DfES, Sept 2004)
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007)

Date of next Review: Spring 2010

Guidance for Staff for Child Protection

Abuse of children can initially be spotted by parents, teachers, peripatetic teachers, governors, volunteer helpers, or non teaching staff; in other words anyone. You need not have any evidence but merely reasonable grounds for suspicion. No blame will be apportioned in cases where abuse is not detected. This guidance is to inform all staff of the most common signs of child abuse and to prescribe the procedures that must be followed to protect the child.

Child abuse manifests itself in a wide variety of ways, e.g. physical, emotional, sexual or severe neglect. Abuse of all kinds occurs right across the social spectrum. Although the signs of child abuse are well documented many of the symptoms taken in isolation can occur in situations where no child abuse is occurring, will occur or has ever occurred. Many of these signs may also be indications of other medical, social or psychological problems or simply normal child development. Members of staff therefore need to be careful and thoughtful in ascertaining whether abuse is suspected. The large number of signs and symptoms described in this policy need to be considered in the light of normal child development, e.g.

- temper tantrums may be expected from a three-year-old but may be a sign of serious distress in a child of 10;
- an interest in sexual topics and members of the opposite sex is to be expected in a pupil of 13, but in a 7-year-old, such behaviour may well be a cause for concern.

Considering that Child Protection Procedures apply to all children below the age of 18, staff must decide if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that child abuse is taking place. If they have reasonable grounds then they must act immediately. It is safer to act or to discuss your concerns with the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) than to delay.

Many agencies and support services are able to help identify and assess pupils' needs and to provide support for those pupils. Co-operation between the school, the health services, social services and other agencies is vital for the most effective assessment, intervention and deployment of resources to ensure the safety of children. Immediate contact and close liaison between agencies such as the Social Services Department, Local Constabulary, Local Health Authority and NSPCC is essential in cases of child abuse. All agencies must understand that in Child Protection cases they are not only required to carry out their own agency functions, but are also making a vital contribution to advising and assisting the local authority to discharge its statutory Child Protection/Child Care duties.

Every school must have a Designated Senior Member of Staff who is responsible for Child Protection issues. At St Helen's this is Mary Morris and Paul Tiley. In the EYFS setting it is Joanna Chaventre. The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection should ensure that all members of staff (teaching and support staff) are familiar with the contents of this Child Protection Policy; it forms an integral part of the induction programme for all new staff and existing staff are retrained at three yearly intervals.

Recent legislation regarding the identification of convicted 'child sex offenders' states that their residence address and identity will be released to Head on a 'need to know' basis. The police decide if that information should be released to parents, not the Head. In the situation where a Head is aware that a 'child sex offender' is in the vicinity of the School, but no authorisation has been given to inform parents, then that Head may be well advised to make 'awareness of strangers' and 'personal safety' a high profile topic in:

- the current assembly programme

- the current PSHCE scheme of work.

Recruitment

Safe recruitment practice means scrutinising applicants by:

- verifying identity and any academic and/or vocational qualifications;
- obtaining professional and character references;
- checking previous employment history, health and the physical capacity of the candidate for the job;
- conducting a face-to-face interview, a mandatory check of List 99 and an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

The Head and the Governors are to ensure that the checks described above are to be undertaken before appointing any staff.

Types of child abuse and their Symptoms

Child abuse can be categorised into four distinct types, i.e.

1. Physical Abuse:
2. Sexual Abuse:
3. Emotional Abuse:
4. Physical Neglect:

A child can be at risk from any combination of the four categories.

Physical Abuse:

This involves physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

- bruises and abrasions - especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
- slap marks - these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
- twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks - can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking.
- bruising on both sides of the ear - this is often caused by grabbing a child that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- grip marks on arms or trunk - found in babies who are handled roughly or held down in a violent way. Gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child, i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.

- black eyes - are most commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. N.B. A heavy bang on the nose however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- damage to the mouth - e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- bite marks.
- poisoning and other misuse of drugs - e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- burns and/or scalds - a round red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. Some types of scalds known as 'dipping scalds' are always cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately 'dipped' in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

Sexual Abuse:

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- a detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child.
- behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults.
- attempts to inform by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- a fear of medical examinations.
- a fear of being alone - this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters, etc.
- a sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.
- excessive masturbation
- promiscuity.
- unusually explicit or detailed sex play in young children.
- sexual approaches or assaults - on other children or adults.
- pregnancy, urinary tract infections (UTI's), sexually transmitted infections (STI's) are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified.

- bruising to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place.
- discomfort or pain particularly in the genital or anal areas.
- the drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

Emotional Abuse:

The severe adverse effect on 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 - this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Physical Neglect:

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent stomach-aches, feeling unwell, and apparent anorexia can be associated with Physical Neglect. However, typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

- Underweight: a child may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- Inadequately clad - where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Physical Neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgment about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to invoke Child Protection Procedures in the case of neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.

The Symptoms of Stress and Distress:

When a child is suffering from any one or more of the previous four 'categories of abuse', or if that child is 'at risk', she will nearly always suffer from/display signs of stress and distress. An abused child is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:

- a lack of concentration and a fall-off in school performance;
- aggressive or hostile behaviour;
- moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences;
- difficulties in relationships with peers;
- regression to more immature forms of behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking;
- self harming or suicidal behaviour;

- low self esteem;
- wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy - children who persistently run away from home may be escaping from sexual/physical abuse;
- disturbed sleep;
- general personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention seeking behaviour;
- a sudden change in school performance.

Parental Signs of Child Abuse:

Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:

- implausible explanations of injuries;
- unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries;
- injured child kept away from school until injuries have healed without adequate reason;
- a high level of expressed hostility to the child;
- grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development;
- general dislike of child-like behaviour;
- inappropriate labelling of child's behaviour as bad or naughty;
- leaving children unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.

The Roles of Different Staff and Agencies

N.B. for a full description of the roles of various agencies involved in Child Protection Procedures refer to the London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures (section 2).

The Designated Senior Member of Staff:

The Designated Senior Members of Staff are Mary Morris and Paul Tiley. In the EYFS setting it is Joanna Chaventre. They are responsible for contacting Social Services to register concern about a child's welfare and implementing procedures relating to Child Protection. She/he:

- is fully conversant with London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures;
- consults and refers cases to Social Services, emphasising that the referral is under London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures;

- organises training on Child Protection within the School in consultation with the Professional Development Officer and the HR Manager;
- ensures that all staff know about and have access to London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures;
- attends London Safeguarding Children Board training at two yearly intervals (N.B. at least one of the Designated Senior Members of staff does so);
- is aware of the role of other agencies;
- ensures representation/reports to Child Protection Conferences and keep appropriate records;
- supports staff;
- ensures children on Child Protection Register are known and that protection plans are followed and feedback given;
- monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and implementation of the school's Child Protection Policy.

If the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) are absent for any reason, it must be made clear to all staff who is in charge and who, therefore, is acting as the Designated Member of Staff. The Designated Senior Members of Staff must ensure that any person who is acting on their behalf in this way knows the procedure to be followed in the case of suspected child abuse.

In the event of a referral:

- a) The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley), in collaboration with individual staff, must complete the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), detailing signs observed, action taken and outcomes of contact with other agencies, and send it as soon as possible to the Social Services Department.
- b) The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) and/or individual members of staff must be prepared to attend a case conference (usually called by the Social Services Department) at very short notice, if necessary.
- c) The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) should inform the initiating member of staff of what action has been taken.
- d) The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) have a professional duty to enquire about the progress of individual cases in which they are/have been involved.

The Head

If a child is moving to a new school then the Head must pass any on-going concerns to the Head of the new school.

Teaching staff including Breakfast Club and After School Club staff

Abuse of children in attendance at school is most likely to be first noticed by teaching staff and/or non-teaching staff. Teachers bring a number of particular advantages to the recognition of child abuse, i.e.

- they have regular and frequent opportunities to observe children, including opportunities to observe changes in their behaviour.
- they have an ongoing relationship with children, who may confide in them about difficulties that they are experiencing.
- they have knowledge of the wide range of behaviour likely to be seen in children of a particular age.
- they have opportunities to observe the response of a group of children to particular situations. They will, therefore, be sensitive to surprising or unusual responses.

These opportunities to see children in context give a particular value to the observations of teachers. Their insights need to be complemented by the skills of other relevant disciplines, especially those of social workers and medical practitioners. A teacher may become concerned when a child tells him/her about events that have happened to them or to a friend, brother, sister or when another adult claims to be aware of abuse. Teachers value their relationships with parents/guardians and in many situations will share their initial concerns about a child with the parents/guardians. However, in many cases the parents/guardians may be the abusers and so teachers should be prepared to share their concerns with other professionals at an early stage without necessarily informing parents of the action they propose to take. Teachers have a professional duty to:

- observe and be alert to signs of abuse;
- take immediate action in the child's best interest by reporting any suspicion or evidence of abuse or non-accidental injury;
- know the role of the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) and the school and London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures;
- enquire about the progress of individual cases in which they are/have been involved.

All teaching staff must understand the importance of reporting suspicious circumstances and be able to report signs of abuse to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre). Beyond the initial reporting of suspected child abuse, staff have a clearly restricted role as further judgments, action and decisions are the responsibility of other agencies with statutory powers to help the child.

Non-Teaching Staff

As with teaching staff, non-teaching staff have a responsibility to observe and report any suspicion or evidence of abuse or non-accidental injury. All non-teaching staff must understand the importance of reporting suspicious circumstances and be able to report signs of abuse to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre). Beyond the initial reporting of suspected child abuse, non-teaching staff have a clearly restricted role as further judgments, action and decisions are the responsibility of other agencies with statutory powers to help the child.

The Keyworker

Every child placed on the Child Protection Register has a named Keyworker, who is either a member of the Social Services Department or the NSPCC. It is the Keyworker's responsibility to co-ordinate inter-agency activity. Staff in educational establishments can make a vital contribution in advising and assisting the Keyworker, and have a duty to co-operate fully with the Keyworker in providing information, preparing assessments, implementing plans and in supporting the child as appropriate. This may involve liaising with other agencies during school holidays.

Case Conferences

A case conference is called when there has been a Child Protection Investigation. It is not a forum for a formal decision that a person has abused a child, but it should identify those adults who present, or are thought to present, risks to the child. It is the courts who decide the guilt of a person on child abuse charges. Although the Social Services Department normally convenes case conferences, other agencies, including education department staff, may request a case conference. Participation may be limited to those who have a need to know or a contribution to make, and this will always include staff in schools, centres and colleges. Even if alleged abuse had not been identified in the school, the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) should automatically be invited to attend the initial case conference as she/he will undoubtedly have invaluable information to contribute. In order to protect the child a Child Protection Plan is drawn up and the child is placed on the Child Protection Register. This is maintained by Social Services on behalf of the London Safeguarding Children Board.

Records

Case conference records are confidential and the school must ensure the safekeeping of such records and of other documents for individual cases and the eventual secure destruction of such records. Information given at case conferences must not be disclosed without the prior permission of the person who originally supplied the information. The Education (Schools Records) Regulations 1989 exempt any information relating to actual, alleged or suspected child abuse from the requirements of disclosure. When a pupil transfers school all relevant concerns and/or records must be forwarded on. All members of staff are required to record accurately information that may be required in respect of Child Protection. If a child discloses, record the precise information as soon as possible, with date, event, action taken, and sign and date the record. It is very important for staff to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.

All staff records must be passed to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) for storage and action.

Records should not be kept in the child's normal record file but in a separate secure place.

In cases of alleged child abuse which come to court, child protection records may be required by the court. Information required by the court should be given to the officers of the court and not to other persons who may use it as evidence. It is not necessary for other background information on the child to be released and can only be done with parental permission.

Reporting Procedure

A member of staff only requires reasonable cause for concern regarding potential child abuse in order to act. Arriving at the point where information and its interpretation give reasonable cause for concern depends upon the source of information. If the information comes from the child then the teacher should act immediately by taking them to find the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre). One sentence from the child indicating child abuse or non-accidental injury provides you with 'reasonable grounds' and is sufficient for you to act. This may also apply if clear information comes from a sibling or other adult, etc. However, considering that many of the signs of child abuse are also commonly associated with other medical, social or psychological problems or simply normal child development a

teacher may naturally discuss some initial concerns about a child's mental or physical wellbeing with other staff, parents, etc. The abuse could be by one or more pupils against another. However, in many cases the parents/guardians may be the abusers and explanations or comments made by the parents may be sufficient to give the teacher reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury. Once there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury, teachers must not contact the parents any further. When there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury then the following procedure must be implemented immediately:

1. Report the matter to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) immediately. When a child has reported what amounts to suspected child abuse or non-accidental injury then they should be taken to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) immediately. If this is not the case then the concern must be reported verbally or, if this is not possible, by email. The full written report should follow as soon as possible afterwards.

Staff must:

- Remember that the priority is to protect the child.
- Treat the matter seriously.
- Receive the child's story if appropriate, listen but do not judge.
- React to what the child tells you with belief and tell the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Indicate to the child what action you will take and make it clear that you will have to inform others (no secrets). Only inform those with a need to know.
- Keep an accurate record of what you have become aware of and what you have done.
- Limit any questioning bearing in mind the 'must not' points below.

Staff must not:

- Contact the parents. This is the job of Social Services or possibly Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley).
- Interrogate the child if that child has disclosed information or ask leading questions.
- Speak to anyone about whom allegations are made (including colleagues).
- Promise to keep secrets/confidentiality.
- Ask a child outright if they or others have suffered abuse.

The teacher may now withdraw from the immediate process but should remain vigilant.

2. The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) must now seek advice from Social Services as soon as possible but at the latest

within 24 hours. If the time is outside normal office working hours then the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) must contact the Emergency Duty Team of the Social Services Department.

3. If it is necessary for the child to be taken to hospital, then hand the child over to the direct care of medical staff informing them that non-accidental injury is suspected. A member of staff must stay with the child (whether the child has been taken to hospital or not) until the social worker arrives.
4. A social worker will arrive either at the school or the hospital as is appropriate. The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) in collaboration with staff involved in the case must complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF), detailing signs observed, action taken and outcomes of contact with other agencies, and send it as soon as possible to the Social Services Department.
5. If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived then the member of staff must remember that he/she has no right to prevent contact between the parents/guardians and the child or to prevent the removal of the child by the parents/guardians. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the Police should be immediately contacted and fully informed.
6. The social worker(s) will decide on what action to take and it is the Social Services who must contact the parents/guardians. The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) should inform the member of staff who first reported the concern as to what action has been taken. Once a strategy for procuring support has been agreed all parties should be kept well informed of developments as appropriate. The following procedures need not necessarily imply that further action is inevitable. It is important, however, in cases of serious concern that there is communication between schools and the Social Services Department.
7. If staff are still concerned about the child after Social Services have taken action or even after a case conference has occurred then they must ask the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) to inform the Keyworker, and if necessary request that the case conference be reconvened. Unfortunately some instances of abuse recur and staff should remain vigilant.

It is important that at all stages in the above procedure staff make detailed written records of all their reports and actions. Notes should be made of the relevant parts of conversations and phone calls, e.g. their general content and 'Who is to do what?' and should be included in reports.

Once you have passed the child into the system withdraw from the process. It is not appropriate to talk to the child or to offer further support. However, when a pupil has trusted you enough to disclose, they may feel the desire to return to talk (remember that investigations can sometimes take months). In such a situation tell them that you cannot comment or advise as to do so may affect their security and safety both in the short and long term - however you can listen! Defence lawyers could use such advice as evidence against the teacher and the child could misuse any 'discussion' in court.

Allegations against school staff

Teachers must protect themselves and staff should bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. It is important not to touch pupils however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent. When pupils make such an allegation against a member of staff, London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures must be followed and the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) must be informed immediately. This is important for the protection of the member of staff as well as the pupil. Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must also immediately inform the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre). If the concerns are about either of the two Deputy Heads then the Head must be contacted without delay and if they are about the Head, the Chair of Governors must be informed immediately.

In all cases where a member of staff is suspected, the Governor responsible for Child Protection as well as Social Services for the relevant area should be informed immediately.

Advice, Answering Questions & Confidentiality

Members of staff often become initially aware of the possibility of abuse occurring when children ask them for advice or are questioned in a confidential manner. Having considered a teacher's professional responsibilities, the current legal situation and with the aim of protecting staff, the Governing Body have issued the following statement/directive. Failure of staff to adhere to this statement may constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Offering Advice: The Governors and staff believe that the school's function is to provide a general education about sexual, drug and other matters and not to offer individual advice, information or counselling on aspects of sexual behaviour, contraception or social behaviour. However staff may identify sources of professional information and advice when appropriate. If the offering of outside expert advice is not taken up, then a teacher may only give such advice after receiving written permission from the Head and the parents/guardians - clearly this would not be done if the pupil did not wish it. Advice does not legally require consent but the following procedure protects the teacher and the pupil, and acknowledges that teachers may not be qualified to give the required advice. If a pupil asks a teacher for advice on sexual matters, the teacher must not trespass on the parents' rights and responsibilities. Therefore, the teacher should encourage the pupil to seek advice from her parents and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional.

Teachers cannot:

- give personal advice or counselling on sexual matters (including contraception and abortion) to a pupil (either individually or within a group) if a parent has withdrawn that pupil from sex education;
- give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16 (for whom sexual intercourse is illegal) without parental consent. (Legally a teacher can give a child under 16 contraceptive advice if the teacher believes that doing so is in the child's best interests. However, in certain circumstances the teacher could be liable to criminal charges and therefore the Governors' instructions are not to give such advice and to refer the matter to the Head).

Teachers can:

- provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice and treatment, e.g. the School Nurse, the Confidential Listener, their GP or Brook Advisory Centre.

Explicit Questions: It is unlikely to be appropriate to deal with a pupil's explicit questions in front of the whole class. In all cases of explicit questions being asked by a child to a member of staff, abuse should only be suspected when the questions are totally inappropriate to the age of the child.

Confidentiality:

Having considered all available advice and guidance, the Governors and Head state that in circumstances where a pupil is considered at some risk of any type of abuse (sexual, physical, emotional or physical neglect) or in breach of the law, the teacher must refer this immediately in writing to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) in compliance with the London Safeguarding Children Board Procedures for Child Protection. The Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) will decide whether to inform the parents and/or appropriate authorities and may arrange for counselling as appropriate. Although there is no legal duty on a teacher, or the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley) to inform parents of matters which a child has confided to them:

- teachers must not promise confidentiality
- pupils must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) and possibly to parents;
- teachers must use their professional judgment and take into account the school's Child Protection policy to decide whether confidence can be maintained having heard the information;
- teachers must indicate clearly to pupils when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential - the pupil can then decide whether to proceed or not. When the content of the conversation indicates the possibility of child abuse, the teacher must pass that information onto the Designated Senior Members of Staff responsible for Child Protection (Mary Morris and Paul Tiley and, in the EYFS setting, Joanna Chaventre) in accordance with the school policy on Child Protection.