

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**



### **Child protection statement**

#### **This policy should be read in conjunction with the one from DMBC.**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. At Highfields, we endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will act quickly and follow our procedures to ensure children receive effective support and protection.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, places a duty on key persons and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

It is estimated that over two million children in the UK today are living in difficult family circumstances. These include children whose family lives are affected by parental drug and alcohol dependency, domestic abuse and poor mental health. It is crucial that these children and their families benefit from the best quality professional help at the earliest opportunity. For some families, without early help difficulties escalate, family circumstances deteriorate and children are more at risk of suffering significant harm.

Independent reviews and research have long championed approaches that provide early help for these children and their families.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Lucy Carlisle, Head of Academy.**

**The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Miss Tahira Pervez, Deputy Head of Academy.**

**The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is Mr Jim Foy, Jim.Foy@dcstrust.co.uk**

#### **Our core safeguarding principles at Highfields are:**

- The school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- Safer children make more successful learners .
- Policy will be reviewed annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.
- The school will work with other agencies and share information appropriately to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- There is a culture of transparency, openness and, if needed, challenge with

regards to maintaining high standards in safeguarding.

- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

### **Policy aims**

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

### **Terminology**

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. It can also include issues such as health and safety, use of reasonable force, meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions, providing first aid, educational visits, emotional well-being and online safety.

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. All staff have a responsibility for Safeguarding no matter what their role. These are outlined clearly in Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015.

### **DSL responsibilities:**

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need and those with special educational needs.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Ensure the school child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly
- Allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources for staff.

- Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures.
- Ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.
- Ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

### **The deputy DSL**

Is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated lead, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated lead, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

**The Executive Advisory Board and governors** ensures that the school:

- Creates a culture where the welfare of students is paramount and staff feel confident to report any concerns.
- Complies with their duties under legislation - including the Prevent Duty 2015.
- Has an effective safeguarding policy (updated annually and on website) as well as staff behaviour policy and both are provided to and followed by all staff.
- Has considered how children are taught about safeguarding – PSHE/SRE.
- Has evidence of the child voice and that there are systems in place for feedback and pupils views.
- Have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Head of Academy and allegations against other children. Procedures are in place for referral to the DBS disclosure and barring service.
- Has safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and ensures recording of this. Ensures volunteers are appropriately supervised. Ensures at least one person on appointment panel is safer recruitment trained.
- Develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including site staff and the Head of Academy receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements on induction and appropriate child protection training, which is regularly updated in line with any legislation.

### **Good Practice Guidelines and Staff Code of Conduct**

- Treat all pupils with respect.
- Be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse and neglect.
- Recognise that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.
- Set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately, including online.
- Involve pupils in decisions that affect them

- Encourage positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils including challenging inappropriate or discriminatory language or behaviour.
- Avoid any behaviour which could lead to suspicions of anything other than a professional relationship with pupils.
- Read and understand the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, and appropriate IT/social media use.
- Apply the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school procedures.
- Refer all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL,

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

This is part of our wider safeguarding duty. We will intervene where possible to prevent vulnerable children being radicalised. The internet has become a major factor in radicalisation and recruitment. As with all other forms of abuse, staff should be confident in identifying pupils at risk and act proportionately.

We will work with other partners including the Channel Panel. The DSL is appropriately trained and be able to offer advice, support and information to other staff. We will ensure safe internet filters are in place and ensure our pupils are educated in online safety.

### **Helping Children to Keep Themselves Safe**

Children are taught to understand relationships, promote British values and respond to and calculate risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) Sex and Relationships (SRE) education lessons and in all aspects of school life.

Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and have help to work out how those risks might be overcome and the support available to them. Discussions about relationships and risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety and bullying.

The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children and the emotional health and wellbeing of our students is important to us. Pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any worries they may have. At Highfields we have a Learning Mentor, Mrs Burgess who is available to discuss children's worries and concerns and work alongside families.

However all our pupils are aware that if they disclose that they are being harmed or that they have, or intend, to harm another that this cannot be kept secret and that information will need to be shared.

### **Partnership with Parents**

The school shares a purpose with parents to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. Full information is contained on the 'help for your child' page of our website, which includes information on reporting child protection concerns.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child. School will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm (see Section 3: 3 Action by Designated Senior Person)

We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with their child's class teacher, or depending on the nature of the concern, straight to the head. We make parents aware of our policy through our school website.

### **Staff Training and Induction**

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. All staff, will be regularly trained in Safeguarding.

The DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

All training will be recorded and monitored to flag in advance when updates are required.

### **Safer recruitment**

Highfields ensure that we employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) including;

- Verifying identity
- Enhanced DBS (disclosure and barring service) check for those in regulated activity
- Verification on mental and physical fitness
- Right to work in UK
- Professional qualifications.

### **Contractors**

We will check the identity of all contractors working on site and requests checks where they work in regulated activity or unsupervised.

### **Visitors**

The Head of Academy will use professional judgement regarding escorting visitors in the school. All visitors will be asked to wear a badge identifying them as a visitor.

## **Photography and images**

To protect pupils we will:

- Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- Ensure that personal data is not shared.
- Store images appropriately, securely and for no longer than necessary.
- Only use school equipment, i.e. not personal devices.

## **Physical intervention and use of reasonable force**

All staff are encouraged to use positive behaviour models at Highfields. Restraint will only be used as a last resort and all incidents of this are reviewed, recorded and monitored. Reasonable force will be used in accordance with government guidance.

## **E-Safety**

Our pupils increasingly use mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that these technologies can be used to harm children. The school's e-safety policy explains how we aim to keep pupils safe in school. Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying. Chat rooms and some social networking sites are not allowed to be accessed by children at Highfields. Some pupils will undoubtedly be 'chatting' outside school and are informed of the risks of this through PSHE/SRE. Parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using social media.

## **Child Protection Procedures**

### **Categories and Definitions**

To ensure that children at Highfields are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

### **Physical abuse**

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.

### **Emotional abuse**

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 a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

### **Neglect**

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 involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision.  
ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

### **Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a detrimental effect on a child's wellbeing.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Despite the harm it causes, FGM practising communities consider it normal to protect their cultural identity. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. The average age is 10 to 12 years.

School staff should be alert to the following indicators:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM
- A child may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent.
- A child may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion
- A child may request help from a teacher or another adult

From Oct 2015 it is mandatory to report FGM. Teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

### **Trafficked and Exploited Children**

A trafficked child is coerced or deceived by the adult who brings them into the country. Trafficked children are denied their human rights and are forced into exploitation e.g. domestic servitude, forced marriage, criminal activity, begging, benefit fraud, acting as a drug mule, sweatshop or restaurant work. Children may appear to submit willingly through fear for themselves or their family, because their parents have agreed to the situation or because of bribes. Recognition of trafficked and exploited children will normally rely on a combination of general signs of abuse and neglect and issues concerned with the child's immigration status. These children may not be in possession of their own travel documents, be excessively afraid of being deported, be in possession of false papers, being cared for by an adult who is not their parent, presenting with a history of missing links and unexplained moves. School staff should make a referral to Children's Social Care if they suspect a child has been trafficked.

CSE – updated March 2017

“Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

“The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.”

### **Taking Action**

It is the responsibility of staff to report and record their concerns as soon as possible. We actively encourage a 'never do nothing' attitude if staff have a concern about a child and promote discussion with DSL if in any doubt. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

It is **not** the responsibility of the school staff to investigate or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation of abuse or neglect. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly all concerns indicating possible abuse or neglect will be recorded and discussed with the designated senior person with responsibility for child protection (or in his/her absence with the person who deputises) prior to any discussion with parents.

### **Staff must immediately report:**

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play

- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
- any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. significant changes in behaviour, worrying drawings or play)
- any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment
- any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
- any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance
- any hint or disclosure of abuse or neglect received from the child, or from any other person, including disclosures of abuse or neglect perpetrated by adults outside of the family or by other children or young people
- any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. staff in school or person living in a household with children present) including
- inappropriate behaviour e.g. inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

### **Responding to Disclosure**

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents or other members of the public. Highfields recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the designated person and make records accordingly.

### **Allegations regarding person(s) working in or on behalf of school provision (including volunteers)**

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the school, that he or she has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

school will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document stated above.

Signed *Lucy Carlisle* Head of Academy



M. Wriglesworth  
Chair of EAB

Amended January 2017  
To be reviewed September 2017  
To be ratified at full EAB March 2017