

# ORCHARD LEA JUNIOR SCHOOL

## Child Protection Policy, Procedure and Guidance



*This policy applies to all staff at Orchard Lea Junior School.*

## Orchard Lea Junior School Child Protection Policy

### **Policy Statement**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

### **Definitions**

Within this document:

**Child Protection** is an aspect of safeguarding, but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term **Staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and governors.

**Child** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18 birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents, guardians and foster carers.

**Abuse** could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and / or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

### **Aims**

- To provide Staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in so doing ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.

### **Principles and Values**

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexuality, religion, culture or language have a right to be protected from harm.

- All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm in accordance with the guidance.
- We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.
- Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact children's social care or the police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests.

## **Leadership and Management**

We recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can undermine good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process.

In this school any individual can contact the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a young person.

**DSL** is **Steve Summerton** and the **deputy DSL** are **Emma Thornbury and Kim Abbott**. There is a nominated governor, **Maureen Lettice**, who will receive reports of allegations against the headteacher and act on the behalf of the governing body

## **Training**

All staff in our school are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. Training is provided every year with separate training to all new staff on appointment. The DSL will attend biannual training to enable them to fulfil their role.

Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings and then captured in the next whole school training. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.

## **Referral**

Following any concerns raised by staff, the DSL will assess the information and consider if significant harm has happened or there is a risk that it may happen. If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm has been reached; or they are not clear if the threshold is met, then the DSL will contact children's social care. If the DSL is not available or there are immediate concerns, the staff member will refer directly to children's social care

Generally the DSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral however there are situations where this may not be possible or appropriate.

***N.B.*** *The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the teacher to report directly to the police.*

## **Confidentiality**

- We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'working together' guidance.
- Information will only be shared with agencies who we have a statutory duty to share with or individuals within the school who 'need to know'.
- All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential.

**As a school we will educate and encourage pupils to keep safe through:**

- The content of the curriculum
- A school ethos which helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.

**Dealing with allegations against staff**

If a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff this information will be recorded and passed to the headteacher **Name**. The local authority designated officer (LADO) will be contacted and the relevant guidance will be followed

If the allegation is against the headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO or nominated governor directly.

**Dealing with allegations against pupils**

If a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a pupil abusing another pupil within the school, the 'dealing with allegations against pupils' guidance will be followed (Annex 6)

**Legal context**

Section 175 (maintained schools) or section 157 (independent schools and academies) of the education act 2002.

Children act 2004 & 1989

Guidance

Hampshire safeguarding children board [protocols and guidance](#) and their [procedures](#)

[Working together to safeguard children 2015](#)

[Keeping children safe in education 2016 \[new link to be inserted as soon as new guidance published\]](#)

[Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 \(2015\)](#)

**Annual review**

As a school, we review this policy at least annually in line with DfE, HSCB and HCC and other relevant statutory guidance.

**Date approved by governing body:**

**Date reviewed by governing body:**

## **Roles and responsibilities within Orchard Lea Junior school**

### **Staff responsibilities**

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this they will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems.
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Attend training in order to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” with regards to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the relevant person as soon as practical that day.
- If the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff they will follow the allegations’ procedures (Annex 5).
- Follow the procedures set out by the HSCB and take account of guidance issued by the DfE.
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to “keep a secret”.
- Notify DSL of any child on a child protection plan who has unexplained absence.
- In the context of early help, staff will notify colleagues and/or parents of any concerns about their child(ren), and provide them with, or signpost them to, opportunities to change the situation.
- Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.
- Ensure they know who the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL are and know how to contact them.

### **Senior management team responsibilities:**

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with guidance (working together 2015)
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- Working with children’s social care, support their assessment and planning processes including the schools attendance at conference and core group meetings
- Carry out tasks delegated by the governing body such as training of staff; safer recruitment; maintaining a single central register
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow procedures

- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from department for education (DfE), Hampshire safeguarding children board (HSCB) and Hampshire county council (HCC)

### **Governing body responsibilities**

- The school has effective safeguarding policies & procedures including a child protection policy and a staff behaviour policy
- HSCB is informed annually about the discharge of duties via the safeguarding audit
- Recruitment, selection and induction follows safer recruitment practice.
- Allegations against staff are dealt with by the headteacher.
- A member of the senior staff team is designated as designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and have this recorded in their job description
- Staff have been trained appropriately and this is updated in line with guidance
- Any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses are remedied without delay
- They have identified a nominated governor for allegations against the headteacher

### **DSL responsibilities** *(to be read in conjunction with DSL role description in KCSiE 2016)*

**In this school the DSL is Steve Summerton**

**The deputy DSL are Kim Abbott and Emma Thornbury**

In addition to the role of staff and senior management team the DSL will

- Assist the governing body in fulfilling their responsibilities under section 175 or 157 of the education act 2002
- Attend initial training for the role and refresh as required by law. By attending the initial refresher training and then demonstrating evidence of continuing professional development thereafter
- Ensure every member of staff knows who the DSL is, is aware of the DSL role and has their contact details
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL
- Ensure that whole school training occurs annually so that staff and volunteers can fulfil their responsibilities
- Ensure any members of staff joining the school outside of this training schedule receive induction prior to commencement of their duties
- Keep written records of child protection concerns securely and separately from the main pupil file and use these records to assess the likelihood of risk
- Ensure that copies of safeguarding records are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child transfers school
- Ensure that where a pupil transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, the information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed
- Link with the HSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable the identification and reporting of all cases, or suspected cases, of abuse

## **Orchard Lea Junior School child protection procedures**

### **Overview**

The following procedures apply to all staff working in the school and will be covered by training to enable staff to understand their role and responsibility.

The aim of our procedures is to provide a robust framework which enables staff to take appropriate action when they are worried a child is being abused.

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child.

Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult, the interests of the child must be paramount.

### **If a member of staff suspects abuse or they have a disclosure of abuse made to them they must:**

1. Make an initial record of the information
2. Report it to the DSL / headteacher immediately
3. The DSL or headteacher will consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, however urgent medical attention should not be delayed if DSL or headteacher are not immediately available (see point 8 below)
4. Make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:
  - Dates and times of their observations
  - Dates and times of any discussions they were involved in.
  - Any injuries
  - Explanations given by the child / adult
  - What action was taken
  - Any actual words or phrases used by the child

The records must be signed and dated by the author.

### **Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the DSL must:**

1. Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm in which case a referral must be made to children's social care
2. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement before making a referral to children's social care. However, in accordance with DfE guidance, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk or could impact a police investigation. The child's views should also be taken into account.

3. If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm they must contact children's social care via the children's reception team (CRT) on 01329 225379 and make a clear statement of:
  - the known facts
  - any suspicions or allegations
  - whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family

If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary they can phone children's reception team (CRT) to discuss concerns

4. If there is not a risk of significant harm, then the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or consider the early help process
5. The DSL must confirm any referrals in writing to children's social care, within 24 hours, including the actions that have been taken. The written referral should be made using the inter-agency referral form (IRAF) which will provide children's social care with the supplementary information required about the child and family's circumstances. (IRAF can be accessed at the following link [https://hampshire.firmstep.com/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=Md\\_9d1aRLwN&HideAll=1](https://hampshire.firmstep.com/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=Md_9d1aRLwN&HideAll=1))
6. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police should be called. The DSL should also notify children's social care of the occurrence and what action has been taken
7. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with children's social care or the police whether, the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation.
8. When a pupil is in need of *urgent* medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the DSL or headteacher should take the child to the accident and emergency unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified children's social care. The DSL should seek advice about what action children's social care will take and about informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention.