

Safeguarding Policy Procedure and Guidance

2015-16
Introduction

Purpose:

Safeguarding is taken extremely seriously with the school to ensure that our children feel safe to learn.

Aim(s):

That all staff abide by the Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 guidance. All staff have been sent a copy of this. They have also been given the compulsory three yearly Safeguarding training provided by the Borough of Bournemouth. The ESW works closely with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure we are up to date with any new legislation and recommendations from Serious Case Reviews.

Objectives:

Identifying Abuse

Abuse may take several forms:

- **Physical abuse:** this 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:** this 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 the child they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It can also involve the seeing or hearing of ill-treatment of another (ie domestic violence/radicalisation on the internet). It can also include cyber bullying or serious bullying or exploitation or corruption of children.
- **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities including non-contact activities such as involving them to look at or in the production of sexual images (ie via the internet) Sexual abuse is not just perpetrated by adult males, women can also commit this as can other children.
- **Neglect:** Persistent failure to meet child's basic physical/psychological needs. Can occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Not providing basic necessities eg food, clothing, shelter, caring supervision, protection from physical/emotional harm, not ensuring access to medical care or treatment.

Grooming and Entrapment

The vast majority of teachers and other school staff work tirelessly to ensure the education of future generations. There are, however, a select few who use the power inherent in their role to abuse that trust and to target vulnerable children and young people for sexual abuse.

The power imbalance present in this influential relationship may be abused, resulting in long-term trauma for the pupil. It is therefore of critical importance that those involved in education have a greater understanding how these adults groom and entrap their pupils.

Grooming is a conscious, purposeful, and carefully planned approach used by the offender to gain access to the child, gain the child's trust and compliance and maintain the child's secrecy to provide opportunities to abuse and reduce the likelihood of being reported or discovered. This process is thought to strengthen the offender's abusive pattern of behaviour, as it may be used as a means of justifying or denying their actions. Some potential warning signs of sexual abuse in the context of education include:

- A pupil receiving special attention or preferential treatment
- Excessive time spent alone with a pupil outside of the classroom
- Frequently spending time with a pupil in private or isolated areas
- Transporting a pupil possibly to or from school
- Making friends with a pupil's parents and visiting their home
- Acting as a particular pupil's "listening ear"
- Giving small gifts, money, toys, cards, letters to a pupil
- Using texts, telephone calls, e-mails or social networking sites to inappropriately communicate with a pupil
- Overly affectionate behaviour with a pupil
- Flirtatious behaviour or making suggestive remarks or comments of a sexual nature around a pupil
- Other pupils are suspicious and make jokes or references

Other Important Definitions:

Domestic Abuse – any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners. The school has recently signed up to the MARAC (Multi-agency risk assessment conference) and domestic abuse alert information sharing protocols and are now provided data by the police. The school receives information from the police to alert the ESW, Deputy DSL when there has been an incident of domestic abuse in a household where a pupil lives. We are not informed of the detail of the incident, only that one has occurred. This allows us to monitor and support the pupil. If we have additional concerns we will discuss the need for further safeguarding actions with Social Care. This information is only shared with other staff on a restricted need to know basis. Where a MARAC occurs, the school may be asked for information and appropriate school related information may be shared with the school after the meeting.

Child Missing from Education - a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Child Sexual Exploitation – a form of sexual abuse which involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, accommodation, affection or status. The ESW attends six weekly Bournemouth CSE Intelligence Meetings along with other agencies to discuss the young people who are at risk in the Bournemouth area. All pastoral staff have received in-house training on what CSE is and how to refer children.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) - staff should be aware of new reporting requirements with regards to known cases of female genital mutilation. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Procedures to be followed by the Designated Teacher(s)

- A child may disclose abuse to anyone. Information should always be taken seriously.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

- In line with the Bournemouth and Poole Local Safeguarding Children’s Board, the inter-agency safeguarding procedures outline the legal framework within which investigations take place.
- The Designated Teacher must be informed as soon as possible. Parents not to be informed at this stage as it may harm any police investigation.
- It may be appropriate to talk to other members of staff to see if they have seen anything amiss with the child. This should be done quickly and discretely.
- If physical abuse, it will be necessary to try to determine how the injury happened from the child. Everything to be written down with possible actual words used. A suitable diagram should be completed with date, time and name of interviewer.

What school staff should do if they have concerns about a child?

If staff members have concerns about a child they should raise these with the school’s designated safeguarding lead. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children’s social care, but it is important to note that any staff member can refer their concerns to children’s social care directly.

What school staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member

If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the Headteacher. Where there are concerns about the Headteacher this should be referred to the chair of governors. (See policy on Allegations against Staff for full procedures)

What school staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school

Staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school’s safeguarding regime. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place for such concerns to be raised with the school’s management team.

Support

- Pupils who are the subject of a Child Protection Conference will have either an agreed multi-disciplinary action plan or child protection plan. The DSL will attend planning meetings and core groups specified in the plan and contribute to the assessments and plans.
- Child abuse investigations inevitably involve a number of individuals/agencies. This can be stressful for students – identifying one member of staff as their “key worker” should be helpful.

- Staff: the designated staff member should make arrangements for teachers to whom disclosures have been made to have support as necessary.

Outcomes

Each case is different but the outcome of what to do should then be the same.

Enquiries will lead to one of these conclusions:

- The suspicion was unfounded in which case the notes should be kept and the person who initiated the concern should come back to the Designated Teacher if there is any further suspicion.
- The suspicion was probably or possibly well founded but while concern remains there is nothing tangible to take the matter further. Staff should remain vigilant and subsequent concerns documented and acted on.
- The suspicion was probably/definitely well founded and the child should receive protection. Social Care should be informed immediately.

Other Concerns

There will be other circumstances, not amounting to abuse, which give staff serious cause for concern about the care of students. Questions of a child being in moral danger, being uncared for, engaging in anti-social or inappropriate behaviour out of school including inappropriate use of digital technology. These should be referred to Designated Leads or Year Leaders who may refer to the Police or Social Care.

The Prevent Agenda

DSL and ESW share the role for Prevent Lead which was brought into being in 2009 following the 7/7 bombings in London. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. It forms part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy that aims to stop people becoming terrorists. This involves assessing the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into terrorism and works as a multi-agency approach.

Sources and references:

Working Together to Safeguard Children (Inter-agency statutory guidance) HM Government 2015

Keeping children safe in education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges DfE 2015

NSPCC

Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Bournemouth LA

Principles/values:

The school plays a vital role in ensuring the safety of all our students regardless of age and all employees undertake their responsibilities with the utmost of importance.

Roles and responsibilities 2015/16

A Member of SLT with responsibility for oversight of the Safeguarding policy within St Peter's along with the Designated Lead at Iford. In addition, there is an Education Social Worker, who works on both sites who is also a Designated Lead for Safeguarding. The Link Governor is responsible for monitoring the safeguarding agenda ensuring that the policy is fit for purpose.

Concluding Notes**Monitoring and review:**

Weekly meetings between the safeguarding leads within the school and termly meetings between the SLT lead and link Governor.
Reviewed via termly updates to the SWC.

Other documents and appendices:

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners HM Government 2015.

Governor approval date: SWC Committee 11 November 2015

Ratified by Full Governing Body: 9 December 2015

Next review date: November 2018