

Hythe House Education

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Version (Date): February 2015

Review (Date): February 2016

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:

- DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014)
- DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

Safeguarding includes many school issues including bullying, racism, health and safety and e-safety, all of these policies are available upon request to the school.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the schools Designated Child Protection Coordinator (Robert Duffy)

Ofsted's definition of safeguarding

“Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes issues for schools such as: pupil health and safety; bullying; racist abuse; harassment and discrimination; use of physical intervention; meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions; providing first aid; drug and substance misuse; educational visits; intimate care; internet safety; issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity; school security.” (*Briefing for Section 5 Inspectors on Safeguarding Children, Ofsted 2011*)

This policy should thus be understood alongside school policies on related safeguarding issues of this document. Related policies can be found in the Policy files folder and on the school staff area of the network.

All relevant policies will be reviewed on an annual basis by the DCPC which has responsibility for oversight of school safeguarding and child protection systems. The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator / Head Teacher will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems in school to Hythe House Support. Our school is a community and all those directly connected (staff, proprietors, carers and students) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. We welcome suggestions and comments contributing to this process.

ETHOS

Hythe House Education recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame.

Hythe House Education will endeavour to support the welfare and safety of all students through:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- Ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning
- Ensuring that child protection is included throughout the school to help children stay safe, recognise when they don't feel safe and identify who they might / can talk to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that students have a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties
- Promoting a positive, supportive, neutral and secure environment where pupils can develop a sense of being valued and heard in their own right
- Ensuring all steps are taken to maintain site security and student's physical safety
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies

Responsibilities

The DCPC has overall responsibility for the day to day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in school, Including:

- Co-ordinating safeguarding action for individual children
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals as necessary
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns
- Maintaining a confidential recording system
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences)
- Managing and monitoring the school's part in CAF / Child in Need / Child Protection plans
- Organising training for all school staff

The proprietors and Social Work staff will ensure that the DCPC is properly supported in this role at a time and resource level.

However, **child protection and welfare are the responsibility of all staff in school and ANY observation, information or issue which results in concern for a pupil's welfare MUST be reported to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) (DCPC).**

In order to protect confidentiality, safeguarding information about individual children is shared on a need to know basis only and thus, what may seem to be a minor issue to one staff member, may be highly significant to the bigger picture of risk.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Hythe House Education adheres to the local KSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2012). A copy of the ***Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Handbook (KSCB 2012)***, ***'What to do if you are Worried About a Child Being Abused' (DfES 2006)*** and the **Kent and Medway Inter-Agency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need** can be found in the main school office.

Additional extended KSCB procedures relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCB website www.kscb.org.uk

It is the responsibility of the DCPC to gather and collate information obtained on individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide (with parents / carers in most cases) on the appropriateness of referrals to partner agencies and services. To help with this decision the DCPC may choose to consult with the Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding). Advice may also be sought from Children's Social Services Duty Social Workers who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the Child in Need / Child Protection process. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware

of these. Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a decision to refer to Children's Social Services or other services is made.

Such referrals might include referral to Children's Social Services as either Child Protection or Child in Need, to Police where there are potential criminal issues, referral to the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) process or referral to services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), counselling, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), etc.

Referrals to Children's Social Services will be made using Kent's inter-agency referral form and with reference to the Kent and Medway Interagency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the County Duty Team. All referrals are now made via the County Duty Team / KCAS.

In all but the most exceptional cases parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Social Services will be sought.

In the absence of the availability of the DCPC to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, advice should be sought directly from the Headteacher / Hythe House Support Social Work staff or from the Children's Safeguards Team (tel:01227 284636) or Children's Social Services Duty Team(Tel : 08457626777)

The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

The school has a nominated DCPC for safeguarding. The nominated DCPC will take the lead role in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policy and structures supporting safeguarding children are reviewed annually.

A statement in the school prospectus will inform parents and carers about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection and safeguarding procedures. Parents / carers can obtain a copy of the school Safeguarding Policy and other related policies on request.

Recognition and categories of abuse:

All staff in school should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse :

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The most up to date definitions are found in Appendix 1 of this document.

Indicators and signs of abuse are listed in the leaflet ***“Safeguarding Children and Child Protection - Induction Leaflet Guidelines for School Staff”*** distributed to all staff. A copy of this leaflet can be found for all staff in the main office.

Staff need to remember that child abuse can occur within all social groups regardless of religion, culture, social class or financial position. Children who have a disability are statistically subject to greater risk of abuse and are particularly vulnerable.

It is also important to remember that those who abuse children can be of any age, gender, ethnic group or background and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions to prevent recognition or action taking place.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING

All school-based staff will be offered an appropriate level of safeguarding training (to include internal school procedure and responsibilities; child protection process; how to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms of concern and abuse; safe working practice) and must undergo refresher training every three years. Training is organised by the DCPC in line with government guidance.

The school leadership team will ensure the DCPC(s) attend the required DCPC safeguarding training when they first take up the role and that they continue to update their knowledge on an on-going basis and at least every 2 years as required by guidance.

The DCPC will ensure that all new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted as regards the school’s internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines.

The DCPC will detail all safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained.

RECORD KEEPING

Staff must record any welfare concern that they have about a child on a safeguarding incident/concern form (with a body map where injuries have been observed) to be passed to the DCPC. Records must be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event and must be signed and dated.

Incident/concern forms are kept in the main school office.

Safeguarding records are kept centrally and securely by the DCPC and are shared on a ‘need to know’ basis only. They should be held separate from the child’s curriculum file.

The Head Teacher will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DCPC.

All safeguarding records will be forwarded to a child’s subsequent school under confidential and separate cover to the new DCPC or Head teacher.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Hythe House Education recognises that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that might cause harm to children and takes seriously any allegation received. Such allegations should be referred immediately to the Director of Education who will first contact the Area Children’s Officer - Children’s Safeguards

Team (who fulfils the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) function) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member.

All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.

For specific guidance on how to respond to allegations against staff, please refer to the *“Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff”* which can be found in the school office or **KCC’s Whistle-blowing Procedures**.

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Hythe House Education recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children’s needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals (in discussion with support staff/carers) as appropriate.

Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and thus, the school will pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies, who we will support in undertaking their roles. Staff should understand that alongside this, the school may have a crucial role in supporting the child whilst investigations and assessments take place.

Hythe House Education recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and CAF Teams around the Child.

The School Leadership Team and DCPC will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Safeguarding and child protection information is confidential and personal. Other than the agreed communication lines in school, it is for the DCPC(s) to decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, how and when, and whether consent needs to be gained for this process. If in any doubt, the DCPC can seek advice from the Children’s Safeguard’s Team and liaise with Hythe House Supports social work team.

If a member of staff needs to seek advice about a safeguarding situation for a child independently for the purposes of keeping a child safe (specifically with the Children’s Safeguards Team or Children’s Social Services), it is appropriate for the detail to be discussed, although the staff member may choose to maintain the anonymity of the child whilst initial consultation takes place.

All staff should remain aware that they cannot keep 'secrets' and absolute confidentiality with children, and that if children disclose abuse or give information that suggests they may be unsafe, this MUST be passed on to the DCPC as soon as possible. The child should be told who their disclosure will be shared with and what will happen next. Further advice on dealing with disclosures can be found in the document ***"Child Protection - Dealing with Disclosures in School"***

CURRICULUM AND STAYING SAFE

Schools play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) states that the curriculum should ensure opportunities for "developing children's understanding, awareness and resilience".

Hythe House Education will use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others. Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff when they are in difficulty and to raise comments, complaints and feedback about their school experience. Children at Hythe House Education will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate. Records will be kept of reported incidents in line with guidance.

E-SAFETY

It is recognised that the use of new technologies presents particular challenges and risks to children both inside and outside of school. Hythe House Education will ensure a comprehensive curriculum response to enable all pupils/students to learn about and manage the associated risks effectively and will support carers and the school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online. Detailed information can be found in the school's ***e-Safety policy*** which can be found in the school office.

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DCPC.

All new staff employed at Hythe House Education are made aware of the schools DCPC and will receive training as part of their induction.

The DCPC can put staff and carers in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach Support Line directly.

SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

Staff are required to work within clear Guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the school's Code of Conduct.

Children may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children to be conducted in view of other adults.

Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by all staff involved. Staff should be aware of the school's **Behaviour Management Policy**, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training should be provided.

Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (e-mail; mobile phones; texting; social network sites) and should familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People**, the school's **e-Safety Policy** and **Acceptable Use Policy** and the **KSCB document : Safer Practice with Technology – Guidance for Adults who Work with Children and Young People**.

COMPLAINTS

The school has a **Complaints Procedure** available to parents, carers, pupils/students and staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found in the school office and on the schools website.

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with directly with the Head Teacher or another proprietor if the allegation is against the Head Teacher.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Hythe House Education is committed to ensure that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our students and have their welfare and protection as the highest priority. The School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within Guidance, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record; and an

application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.

THE USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Hythe House Education is not used by any outside organisations. If this situation was to change in the future it is the responsibility of the Director of Education to carry out checks and decide if the organisations use was accepted.

SECURITY

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole-school community ethos and welcome comments from pupils/students, carers and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the visitor's log any visitor must not be left on their own with students unless they have permission from the Director of Education.

Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the 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 affects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and may include interactions beyond the child's developmental ability, overprotection, limitation of exploration or learning, prevention of normal social interaction. Seeing or hearing ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including Cyberbullying) causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or exploitation and corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing .They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, sexual images, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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. It may occur in pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.