

# Safeguarding Children Policy



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of The Pegasus Academy Trust's (PAT) and Thornton Heath Nursery School's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our schools is safe and protected. This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about the expected behaviour and responsibility when managing safeguarding concerns.
- 1.2 Our schools fully recognise the contribution they can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all who are registered pupils at our school. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support. Our policy applies to all staff, parents, carers, governors, volunteers, visitors and pupils. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection Policy, our Equalities policy, our Behaviour Policy, our Whistleblowing Policy, our Health, Safety and Welfare policy and our First Aid procedures.
- 1.3 At PAT we work with children, parents and our local community to ensure the safety and welfare of children.
- 1.4 We are committed to:
- building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its delivery;
  - responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures at PAT;
  - promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children to promote their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.
- 1.5 This policy relates to the "staying safe" outcome of the 'Every child matters' document and contributes to multi agency local safeguarding practice.

***"All people working in education and schools contribute to the safeguarding and promoting of children's welfare. All schools and further education institutions have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Consequently the staff in these establishments play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect by early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm and by educating children, about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum. All schools and further education institutions should create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people, and should be able to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns."***

***HM Government 2007 -"Statutory Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004"***

- 1.6 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (as defined by 'Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment, Jan. 2007) is:
- protecting children from maltreatment;
  - preventing impairment of children's health and development;
  - ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

- 1.7** “Safeguarding” is taken to mean all agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children’s welfare are minimised” and “where there are concerns about children and young people’s welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies”

## **2. Aims**

**2.1** Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- a) promoting children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background;
- b) promoting children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging them to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- c) promoting children’s rights to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling them to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- d) helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults; and
- e) working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

**3.1** At PAT the Executive Headteachers are the designated safeguarding lead person with responsibility for safeguarding. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience they are able to liaise with Children’s services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals to Children’s services.

**3.2** Any concern for a child’s safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the Executive Headteacher and in his/her absence the Head / Deputy Head of School.

**3.3** The designated safeguarding lead person or their deputy (e.g. Inclusion Managers) will represent our school at child protection conferences and, where deemed necessary, core group meetings and will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.

**3.4** The designated safeguarding lead person will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have access to single agency training.

**3.5** The Directors of the Pegasus Academy Trust will ensure that our safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. The content of our policy has been written following consultation with the Local Authority and the requirements of the Safeguarding Children’s Board Policies and Procedures.

**3.6** The board of Directors will receive a safeguarding report that will record training that has taken place, the number of staff attending and any outstanding training requirements for the school. It will also record all safeguarding activity that has taken place, for example, meetings attended, reports written, training or induction given. It will not identify any individual pupil.

**3.7** Should an allegation be made against the one of the Executive Headteachers, the Chair of Directors will be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority.

- 3.8** At all times the Executive Headteachers and board of Directors will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed. We require evidence of original academic certificates. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children.

## **4. Procedures**

- 4.1** When staff join our schools they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. When packs of information go out to potential applicants for posts within the Trust copies of our school's safeguarding policy and child protection policy are included. The Executive Headteachers have overall responsibility for safeguarding in our schools.
- 4.2** Our induction programme for new staff includes basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record and who to whom the pass information should be passed.
- 4.3** When new pupils join our school, all parents and carers are informed that we have a safeguarding policy. This will be offered to parents should they request a copy and may be available on school websites. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Children's Services

## **5. Training**

- 5.1** Every member of our staff undertakes training on an annual basis; this may be more frequent if there are changes to legislation or to local requirements. Our child protection policy and procedures are reviewed with all staff at the beginning of each academic year.
- 5.2** Staff can find the most up to date safeguarding information on [www.teachernet.com](http://www.teachernet.com) and Croydon have an Early Help support Team which provides support and advice for different levels of need:
- [www.practitionerspace.croydon.co.uk](http://www.practitionerspace.croydon.co.uk) for general advice
  - [earlyhelp@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@croydon.gov.uk) for advice and referral for Early Help Assessment (previously CAF) where multi agency support is needed and/or Children in Need
  - For professionals to make a 'safeguarding referral' [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk) (Follow the link 'Concerned about a Croydon Child') for children with complex additional unmet needs and/or experiencing significant harm that require Child Protection / legal intervention.
  - If it is believed that there is an immediate need for a safeguarding response, staff can call the Safeguarding Consultation Line 020 8726 6464

The Executive Headteacher who is the school's designated safeguarding lead person has access to up to date information and should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern.

## **6. Recruitment**

- 3.1** At PAT the Executive Headteachers, Heads of School (HoS) the chair of Directors and other Directors have undertaken accredited NCSL Safer Recruitment Training. We operate robust safer recruitment procedures and ensure all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff, governors and volunteers.

## **6. Whistleblowing procedures**

### **6.1 Procedures to deal with in school allegations against other members of staff**

- a) It is important that staff and volunteers share in confidence, with the designated person, concerns they may have about another member of staff or volunteers;
- b) All staff have a duty to report concerns about a member of staff or volunteers;
- c) It is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from suspected abuse, harassment or bullying, by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately;
- d) Staff and volunteers who report their concerns that a colleague is or may be abusing a child will be fully supported by the schools. The whistleblower will be treated as a witness, not a complainant;
- e) Allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer should be fully recorded and reported appropriately;
- f) Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents, members of staff and volunteers. (See also the schools' Whistleblowing policy)

## **7. Child protection conferences**

**7.1** On rare occasions staff members (e.g. class teachers) may be asked to attend a child protection conference on behalf of the school in respect of individual children. Usually the person attending from school will be the Head of School or Inclusion Manager. In any case, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible.

**7.2** A child protection conference will be convened if a referral has been made and the following investigation findings have considered the child to be at risk of harm, or the child is already on the child protection register and a review conference is held to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk. Staff may be required to attend child protection conferences or core group meetings to represent the school.

**7.3** Clearly child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. We will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children's Services or whose child is on the child protection register. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with parents and carers.

## **8. Safe staff**

**8.1** There are sometimes occasions when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. Staff in our schools know that they should avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations and always ensure there are two members of staff present when for example a child needs to remove an article of clothing or needs changing following a toileting accident.

**8.2** If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long.

- 8.3** Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open. Sometimes allegations are made against adults who come in to contact with children. We have a responsibility to ensure that we adhere to the requirements of *Safeguarding children in education: Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff*.
- 8.4** There are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. These can be found in the Investigation, Referral and Support Coordinator guidance for *Safe working practice for the protection of children and staff in education settings*. ([www.teachernet.com](http://www.teachernet.com))
- 8.5** All adults who come into contact with children will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made. At PAT we adhere to the guidance laid down in Croydon council's guidance and if necessary we seek appropriate advice from the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator. Neither the Executive Headteachers or any other member of school staff will investigate these matters. We will seek and work with the advice that is provided. Should an allegation be made against either Executive Headteacher, this will be reported to the chair of our Directors who will liaise with Croydon's Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator.
- 9. Physical Intervention/Positive Handling**
- 9.1** Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately, as part of our Behaviour Policy. It complies with the DCSF non -statutory guidance "Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils" 2007 which is available on Teachernet. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- 9.2** We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under L.A. child protection or disciplinary procedures.
- 10. Bullying and cyberbullying**
- 10.1** Our procedures on the prevention and management of bullying are set out in separate policies and acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under achievement for children.
- 11. Sexual exploitation/substance misuse**
- 11.1** Pupils who are identified to be at risk will be referred to Children's Social Care within CSCB child protection procedures.
- 12. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
- 12.1** This form of abuse involves mutilation by way of female circumcision, excision or infibulations. It causes long term mental and physical suffering, difficulty in giving birth, infertility and even death.
- 12.2** The designated safeguarding lead person for child protection will:
- Ensure that all of the school staff are aware of the indicators of the possibility that a child be undergoing or has undergone FGM.
  - Ensure that such concerns are brought to the attention of the designated safeguarding lead person.

### **13. Self Harming & Suicidal Behaviour**

- 13.1** Self-harm and suicide threats and gestures by a child put the child at risk of significant harm, and should always be taken seriously. They may also be indicative of psychological or emotional disturbance triggered by physical, sexual and / or emotional abuse or chronic neglect which may also constitute significant harm.

## **14. Young carers**

**14.1** In many families, children contribute to family care and well-being as a part of normal family life. A young carer is a child who is responsible for caring on a regular basis for a relative (usually a parent, grandparent, sometimes a sibling or very occasionally a friend) who has an illness or disability. Many young carers may experience:

- a) Social isolation;
- b) A low level of school attendance;
- c) Some educational difficulties;
- d) Impaired development of their identity and potential;
- e) Low self-esteem;
- f) Emotional and physical neglect;
- g) Conflict between loyalty to their family and their wish to have their own needs met.

**14.2** Where a young carer is identified, the child's needs will be considered, using the Common Assessment Framework.

## **15. Our ethos**

**15.1** At PAT we aim to establish and maintain an ethos where our pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. Children at our schools will be able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor to our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

**15.2** All staff and regular visitors will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child and will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets.

**15.3** We will endeavour to provide in the activities and opportunities in the PHSE and SEAL curriculum that will equip our children with the skills they need to stay safe and to develop essential life skills.

**15.4** At all times we work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies.

## **16. Records and monitoring**

**16.1** Any adult who is concerned about the welfare or safety of any child records their concerns and gives their report to the Executive Headteacher or HoS. Any information recorded is kept in a separate named file, in a secure drawer and not with the child's academic file. These files are the responsibility of the designated person and information will only be shared within school on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.

**16.2** Any safeguarding information is kept in the file and is added to as necessary. Copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports are stored here.

**16.3** If a child leaves our school the designated person makes contact with the designated person at the following school and the file will be forwarded in an envelope marked "confidential."

## **17. Key documents**

**17.1** The key documents which inform this policy, are:

- a) "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" DCSF Jan 2007
- b) Working Together to Safeguard Children – DH 1999
- c) Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families – DH 2000
- d) What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused - DfES 2003
- e) The London Child Protection Procedures – LSCB 2007
- f) Croydon LEA Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures 2005

**17.2** Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) child protection procedures which are based on the London Child Protection Procedures. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board. .  
[www.croydon.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/lscb)