

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Bickley Park, we follow the Child Protection procedures published by the Bromley Area Child Protection Committee. These inter-agency procedures are used in the process of protecting children up to the age of eighteen years from abuse and neglect by parents, guardians, carers and other adults. Full reference is made to the purple “Child Protection Procedures” file.

We believe that the child’s welfare is paramount and safeguarding and promoting it is the priority. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.

First, and most importantly, we respect our children. This is explicit in the Code of Conduct and in the daily practice of individual teachers. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best, providing opportunities that enable them to take and make decisions for themselves.

Our teaching of PSE and Citizenship help to develop appropriate attitudes amongst the boys and make them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

This policy ensures that all staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- to ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
- to lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

However, procedures are not a substitute for good professional practice. Unless procedures are provided within a framework of good practice, they run the risk of becoming abusive to families.

We listen and work in partnership with children, parents and any other adults who have parental responsibility.

Anti-discriminatory practice is followed to ensure that individuals and families from ethnic and cultural minorities receive an appropriate, sensitive and effective service. Account is always taken of the particular needs of the child, such as race, culture, religion, class, disability, age, health or sexual orientation

## **PROCEDURES**

The Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) (Child Protection Liaison Officer) is the designated member of staff for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies according to Bromley's procedures. A named Governor is responsible for Child Protection. The Heads of EYFS and KS1 are responsible for reporting to the Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) any allegations from the EYFS stage of the school, he will then report to OFSTED any allegations of severe harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises or is alleged to have taken place. Allegations will be reported within 14 days. The Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) undertakes regular training (updated every 2 years) in child protection. In addition, the Headmaster and all staff also undertake regular training (updated every 3 years) and part-time and voluntary staff who work with the children are made aware of the arrangements.

As we are in regular and frequent contact with children, school staff are particularly well placed to observe signs of abuse or unexplained changes in behaviour or performance which may indicate abuse. Bruises, lacerations and burns may be apparent, particularly when children change their clothes for physical education activities. Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparent deficient nutrition, and of emotional neglect such as excessive dependence or attention seeking may be noticeable. Sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs, or lead to a significant behavioural change. These signs can do no more than give rise to suspicion - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred, but as part of their pastoral responsibilities, staff should be alert to all signs. The designation of a Child Protection Liaison Officer should not be seen as diminishing the role of all staff in being alert to signs of abuse.

- It is expected that teachers should ask the child or parent how an injury happened, but if the answer does not correspond with the injury, it is not the responsibility of school staff to make investigative enquiries.
- In any case where a child discloses sexual abuse to a teaching or non-teaching member of staff, that person must immediately report to the Child Protection Liaison Officer. Questioning of the child is not necessary. The Child Protection Liaison Officer will contact the Social Services Department within one hour from the time of the initial disclosure and may seek the advice of the Education Welfare Officer for the school, within this period.

- Teaching or non-teaching staff noticing bruising or other injuries to a child or having cause to suspect abuse or neglect for which no satisfactory account is given, must immediately inform the Child Protection Liaison Officer.
- If a child protection referral is made, a case conference is held within eight working days of the decision. The case conference offers the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action.
- All information relating to individual child protection issues is confidential, and is treated accordingly. Information is only passed on to appropriate persons. The child is to be informed at all stages of who is involved, and what information has been given.
- All adults seeking employment at Bickley Park School must have their application vetted by the CRB [Criminal Records Bureau] in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.
- If there is the need for a teacher, in the course of her/his duty, to use physical intervention to restrain children the Headmaster should be informed immediately and the incident formally recorded.
- Whole staff inset has covered and will continue to cover on a regular basis the area of child abuse and the procedures to be followed in such a case.

If an allegation of child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Headmaster will consider to what extent the Disciplinary Procedure for Teachers should be invoked.

It is the responsibility of each individual member of staff to read the procedures and become acquainted with them.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Headmaster will bring to the attention of the Board of Governors any incidents involving physical restraint and any allegations of abuse.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body, Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team.

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