Safeguarding and Protecting children from harm
PROCEDURE at ST PHILIP’S SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

This procedure applies to all Governors, staff, including supply and ancillary staff and volunteers working in or on behalf of the school.

Everyone working in or for St Philip’s school shares the responsibility to help keep its young people safe by contributing to:

- the provision of a safe environment for young people to learn and develop in our school setting
- identifying young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home, as far as is possible, and in our school setting
- enabling our young people to have optimum life chances and be able to enter adulthood successfully

SCHOOL COMMITMENT

St Philip’s School is committed to protecting children from harm and child protection and promoting the welfare of all of its pupils:

- Each pupil’s wellbeing is of paramount importance
- We recognise that some children may be especially vulnerable to abuse.
- We recognise that children who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way.
- We recognize that whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging.
- We recognize that some children who have experienced abuse may harm others.
- We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The following principles will underpin all of our work with young people. Our approach will:

- be child centered
- take account of risk and protective factors associated with abuse
- actively involve young people and their families
- support the achievement of best possible outcomes for our young people
- be holistic
- ensure equality of opportunity
- promote multi/inter-agency working
- be a continuing process rather than ‘an event’
- identify and provide the service or intervention required and monitor its impact
- be informed by evidence
Safeguarding Information for pupils

All pupils in our school are aware of a number of staff whom they can talk to. The school is committed to ensuring that pupils are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All pupils know that we have a member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding/child protection and know who this is. We inform pupils of adults whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard, and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm.

School’s arrangements for consulting with and listening to pupils are encouraged through a variety of means including the School Council, pupil surveys and the school’s highly skilled WEST (Wellbeing and Emotional Support Team) including enhanced and specialist PSHE.

Partnership with Parents

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate and keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. This is explained to parents during the introductory meeting before students start at the school.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents’ rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

St Philip's School will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm (see Action by Designated Safeguarding Person). We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with their child’s class tutor, in the first instance. We make parents aware of our policy via the school website; parents are made aware that they can view this policy on request.

Partnerships with others

Our school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies who are partners in the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The Headteacher and Safeguarding and Prevention Officer (SPO) are members of the Kingston Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards (LSCB). St Philip’s School, works closely with of outside agencies which include: Social services, Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Education Welfare Service (EWS), Disabled Children’s Team (DCT) and other appropriate agencies.
(a) Types of Abuse and Recognition

Abuse can take a number of forms:

- Physical: causing physical harm to a child by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or some other method. Physical harm can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- Emotional: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child in a way likely to cause severe and persistent negative effects on the child’s emotional development.
- Sexual: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse includes both physical contact and non-contact activities.
- Neglect: 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 and/or development.
- Fabricated or Induced illness: is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, usually the child’s biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.
- Children missing in education: is a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time.
- Faith abuse: Psychological abuse. One specific meaning of the term religious abuse refers to psychological manipulation and harm inflicted on a person by using the teachings of their religion. This is perpetrated by members of the same or similar faith, and includes the use of a position of authority within the religion.
- Gender based violence: “[G]ender-based violence against women” shall mean violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately (ref: Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence)
- Mental Health – Suicide Prevention (see below)
- Peer on Peer abuse – (see below- suicide prevention)

Radicalisation – See policy – Note, in the event of a concern the procedure will be:

**Full discussion with the schools SLT**
To complete a referral to the SPA/ Mash in the borough that the child resides
To contact our Safer Schools Team Becky Soole or Graham White on 0791 7072816

**FGM**

**The Law**
FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985. In 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child abroad to have female genital mutilation. Anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. It is also against the law to make arrangement around it, like booking the flights to go to a country where it will happen. The school will automatically refer all concerns to the SPA or directly to the police.

Suicide Prevention Strategy – [guidance taken from; Preventing Suicide in England: a cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives September 2012]

The consensus from research is that an effective school-based suicide prevention strategy would include:
- a co-ordinated school response to people at risk

All staff know to direct any safeguarding concerns to the designated safeguarding person. The majority of staff have either undertaken MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) two-day course or MHFA Lite course.

- awareness among staff to help identify high risk signs or behaviours (depression, drugs, self-harm) and protocols on how to respond;

Wellbeing and mental health are a part of the school PSHE curriculum and is talked about openly and regularly with students. We also have a wellbeing and emotional support team (WEST) who monitor the mental health and assess all students and work preventatively to reduce the risk of serious mental health issues developing. All young people are scored using the SDQ- high scoring students are monitored (see mental health policy Feb 2017)

- signposting parents to sources of information on signs of emotional problems and risk;

Peer on Peer abuse/Allegations of abuse made against other children

What is peer on peer abuse?
- Peer on peer abuse features physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse of a child/young person by their peers.
- It can affect any child/young person, sometimes vulnerable children are targeted. For example:
  - It is influenced by the nature of the environments in which children/young people spend their time - home, school, peer group and community - and is built upon notions of power and consent. Power imbalances related to gender, social status within a group, intellectual ability, economic wealth, social marginalisation etc, can all be used to exert power over a peer.
  - Peer on peer abuse involves someone who abuses a ‘vulnerability’ or power imbalance to harm another, and have the opportunity or be in an environment where this is possible.
While perpetrators of peer on peer abuse pose a risk to others they are often victims of abuse themselves.

Above information is based on information in Practitioner Briefing: What is peer on peer abuse? MsUnderstood Partnership (2015)

Actions the school will take

The school deals with a wide continuum of students’ behaviour on a day to day basis and most cases will be dealt with via school based processes. This is supported by the schools:
- Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Relationships and sex education procedures
- Safeguarding policy and procedure

The school will also act to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse by ensuring school provides a safe environment, promotes positive standards of behaviour, has effective systems in place where children can raise concerns (WEST) and provide safeguarding through the curriculum via PSHE and other curriculum opportunities. This may include targeted work with identified students. And risk assessments/MEP’s for those identified as being a potential risk to others.

Action on serious concerns

Peer to peer abuse may be a one off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. Staff may be able to easily identify some behaviour/s as abusive however in some circumstances it may be less clear. In all cases the member of staff should discuss the concerns and seek advice from the DSL and/or other members of the safeguarding team.

When an allegation is made by a student against another student, members of staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and/or alleged perpetrator may have emerging needs, complex/serious needs or child protection concerns and follow the process outlined in section 5 of this document.

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of the safeguarding team will consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the process in section 5 in this document will be followed.

Particular considerations for cases where peer on peer abuse is a factor include:

- What is the nature, extent and context of the behaviour including verbal, physical, sexting and/or online abuse. Was there coercion, physical aggression, bullying, bribery or attempts to ensure secrecy? What was the duration and frequency? Were other children and/or adults involved?
What is the child’s age, development, capacity to understand and make decisions (including anything that might have had an impact on this i.e. coercion), and family and social circumstances?

**What are the relative chronological and developmental age of the two children and are there any differentials in power or authority?**

Is the behaviour age appropriate or not? Does it involve inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation?

Are there any risks to the child themselves and others i.e. other children in school, in the child’s household, extended family, peer group or wider social network?

Whenever there is an allegation of abuse made against a child, the Schools deputy HT and the DSL with other relevant parties, will draw together separate risk assessments and action plans to support the victim and the perpetrator.

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate and keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. This is explained to parents during the introductory meeting before students start at the school. Parents are invited to attend regular coffee mornings which offer them information and guidance on a range of social and emotional topics. Parents are also offered support from the WEST team.

- clear referral routes to specialist mental health services.

All concerns are directed to the designated safeguarding person who will refer to specialist mental health services.

“.....safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children - It also encompasses issues such as:

bullying (including cyberbullying), substance misuse, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, radicalisation and extremist behaviour, abuse related to protected characteristics e.g. racism/sexism/homophobia, domestic violence, gang violence, sexting and others.

It is also important to recognise that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. All staff must remain alert to the possibility of peer on peer abuse and take appropriate action to safeguard those involved, in line with this procedure.

Staff may become aware of abuse in a number of ways, including:

- Disclosure by a child
- Disclosure or remarks made by another party (e.g. carer, other professional, member of the public)
- Discovery of bruising or marks on a child’s body
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- Evidence of disturbance or explicit detail in drawing, writing or play
- Evidence of neglect in terms of cleanliness, personal hygiene, failure to thrive or apparent exposure to unnecessary risks
- Persistent lateness, poor or irregular attendance or persistent absence from school

The following procedure must be followed whenever abuse of a child is witnessed, disclosed or suspected.

(b) Reporting within St Philip’s School

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within St Philip’s School with responsibility for Child Protection is Debbie Battle, Safeguarding and Prevention Officer. In her absence it is Ben Walsh, Headteacher.

The DSL has a responsibility to:
- Liaise with the LA, Social Services (Social Services), Police and other agencies on individual cases of suspected or identified child abuse – in Kingston referrals should be made through the Single Point of Access (SPA).
- Act as the contact person/s within the school (this may be delegated to other members of the Safeguarding Team with the approval and supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Act as the first point of contact for any drug-related activity (please refer to the Substance Misuse Policy for further details)
- Be responsible for co-ordinating action within the school on child protection issues
- Liaise with staff on a ‘need to know’ basis so that children’s rights to confidentiality are ensured
- Oversee the planning of any curricular or other provision
- Represent the school at child protection meetings and be a member of the ‘core group’ if required
- Ensure staff are familiar with this Procedure and the overarching OHC&AT Child Protection, Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the London Child Protection Procedures, the LEA Guidelines and relevant government guidance
- Raise awareness about child protection and arrange training for staff
- Call multi-agency Best Interest meetings where appropriate.
- where a child leaves the establishment, ensure the child protection file is copied for the new establishment asap and transferred to the new school (secure post or courier) separately from the main pupil file. If a child goes missing or leaves to be educated at home, then the child protection file should be copied and sent to the Local Authority in which the child lives.
2. Wherever a member of St Philip’s School staff suspects abuse, or witnesses an incident that appears to be abuse, that member of staff must report it to the DSL as soon as possible for advice and guidance. In their absence they should inform a member of the school Safeguarding Team.

3. A confidential report on the incident should be completed as soon as possible if alleged abuse has been witnessed or is suspected. This report must be handed to the DSL or, if they are not available, to a member of the school Safeguarding Team.

4. The Head must be informed of all allegations or suspicions of abuse. This will be done by the DSL. Action set out in this policy should not be delayed until this is done.

(c) Listening to an Allegation of Abuse

5. There are a number of basic ‘rules’ that should be followed to ensure the safe handling of any disclosures of abuse from a child:

- Don’t panic.
- Remember that the safety and well-being of the child come before the interests of any other person.
- Listen to the child and accept what the child says.
- Look at the child directly, but do not appear shocked.
- Don’t seek help while the child is talking to you.
- Reassure them that they did the right thing by telling someone.
- Assure them that it is not their fault and you will do your best to help.
- Let them know that you need to tell someone else.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened.

Take this information to the SPO; in her absence seek the Headteacher, Deputy Head teacher or the student support worker

- You will be asked to write down what the child said in their own words – record what you have seen and heard also.
- Make certain you distinguish between what the child has actually said and the inferences you may have made. Accuracy is paramount in this stage of the procedure

Staff must immediately report

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings or play)
any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment
any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
any significant changes in a child’s presentation, including non-attendance
any hint or disclosure of abuse from any person
any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present)
any concerns that a child is missing from school and at risk of FGM
any concerns that a child is at risk of being drawn into terrorism
any concerns that a child is being exploited (CSE)

(d) Contact with the Family

6. Contact with the family should be discussed with the DSL, who may consult Social Services – In Kingston all referrals are made through SPA. If the child resides in another borough, the referral should be made to that borough.

7. In cases where a minor physical injury causes concern, it may be appropriate to discuss this with the parent or carer. If the explanation suggests a non-accidental cause for the injury (or a failure to protect the child from harm), the parent or carer will be informed that the matter must be referred to Social Services.

8. In cases of possible neglect or emotional abuse, the concern is likely to have built up over a period of time. There may have been discussion between staff and the family about sources of help (e.g. Social Services), but if concerns persist, the DSL will need to refer to Social Services and will normally advise the family of this.

9. In cases where there are suspicions of sexual abuse, the DSL will seek immediate advice from Social Services staff before discussing the matter with the family.

(e) Recording and Reporting

10. The DSL (or a member of the Safeguarding Team at the request of the DSL) will complete the referral form that is pertinent to the local authority that the child lives.

11. All safeguarding referrals will be sent via secure email (USO-FX)
12. Social Services must be contacted about any allegations or suspicions of abuse. This will usually be done by the DSL.

13. All records relating to child welfare concerns will be retained in a CP file held separately from the child’s main file. CP files will be held in lockable storage accessible only to the Head and the DSL, and clearly marked as ‘Confidential – for attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead’.

14. Information from records will only be used on a ‘need to know’ basis.

15. Relevant staff will need to know when a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, so they can monitor the child’s welfare.

16. When a child on a Child Protection Plan leaves the Academy, all the child protection information should be transferred to the new provision, either by secure post or courier --separately from the main pupil file ( copies of CP reports should be kept on file until the young person is 25 years )

17. If the child goes missing from education or is removed from roll to be educated at home then, any Child Protection file should be copied and the copy sent to the LA - Original copies will be retained until the child’s 25th birthday.

18. Safeguarding data reports must be provided to the OHC&AT Executive Senior Leadership Team (ESLT) monthly and to governors termly.

(f) Where a Criminal Offence is Suspected

19. Wherever a criminal offence is alleged, or is suspected to have taken place, the police must be contacted. St Philip’s School staff reporting to Social Services should clarify who will contact the police. If it is agreed that Social Services should contact the police, then the DSL will follow this up by making themselves known to the police and requesting confirmation as to whether the matter is being investigated.

(g) Immediate Risk or Danger

20. If an individual is at immediate risk, or in situations where there is forensic evidence, then the police and, if appropriate, other emergency services must be contacted immediately. In such cases the emergency services should be called before informing the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding team.

(h) Continued Provision of Support

21. St Philip’s School will stay closely involved and will check with the appropriate authorities that the allegation is being appropriately investigated.

(i) Allegations of Abuse against a Member of St Philip’s School Staff
22. Allegations or concerns about a member of staff, worker or volunteer must immediately be notified to the Head (or the Safeguarding Governor if the concern is about the Head) and the same principles of safeguarding applied.

23. In line with Kingston/ Richmond LA procedures, the headteacher will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via the SPA in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by school or if there needs to be a referral to social care and/or the police for investigation.

24. It is important to bear in mind that although concern may relate to an individual pupil, other pupils may also be at risk.

25. The recommended procedures in London Child Protection Procedures will be followed in such cases.

(j) Requests for Assistance by Other Agencies

26. The Academy is required to assist local authority Social Services or the Police when they are making enquiries about the welfare of children.

27. Information about a child must therefore be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis with other agencies (see confidentiality (i)).

28. When telephone requests for information are received, always maintain security by checking the telephone number listing and calling back.

29. Always advise the DSL of any request for assistance from other agencies.

30. Requests for attendance at meetings about individual children (e.g. Child Protection conferences) should be notified to the DSL, who will arrange preparation of a report and attendance at the meeting.

31. Reports should contain information about the child’s:
   - academic progress
   - attendance
   - behaviour
   - relationships with children and adults
   - family
   - any other relevant matter

32. Reports should be objective and distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.

33. Unless you specify otherwise, reports will normally be made available to the child’s family.

(k) Pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan

34. The Academy will be told by the relevant Social Services when a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan (previously the CPR).
35. The Academy will participate fully in the work of the core group, to assist with the objectives of the Child Protection Plan.

36. When a child is on a Child Protection Plan, the Academy will report all absences, behavioural changes or other concerns to the key social worker.

(I) Confidentiality

St Philip’s School has clear and explicit confidentiality guidelines:

This procedure indicates that:

a) Information must be shared with police and Social Care where the child/young person is / may be at risk of significant harm
b) That information is shared on a need to know basis
c) In the event of a disclosure the Designated Safeguarding Person must contact the safeguarding service or SPA prior to contacting parents/carers
d) the person to whom the disclosure has been made must keep the disclosure confidential. They must discuss with the persons named above but they should not discuss it with other colleagues.

Please see the “Seven Rules to Sharing Information” (ref: Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers DFE: March 2015)

Other resources:

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (Safer Recruitment Consortium, 2015)

http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated September 2018 DfE)


Working Together to Safeguard Children

Reference should also be made to the school’s e-safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, RSE Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy, PSHE Policy, Touch Policy, RBK’s Guidelines for Educational Visits and Outdoor Education and Whistleblowing Policy.

Other guidance including:
Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: guidance for teachers and other professionals. [anti-bullying alliance 2014]
Preventive measures-how youngsters avoid online risks [EU Kids Online 2014]
Mental health and behaviour in school [DfE June 2014]
Enough is Enough a policy report for the centre for social justice [June 2014]
Keeping Children Safe in Education [DfE Sept 2016]
Prevent Strategy 2011
The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers June 2015
Preventing Suicide in England: a cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives September 2012