

# **Elmhurst School**

## **Policy for Child Protection**

## **POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION**

*‘The curriculum needs to be delivered in a school with an ethos which empowers children; a school which allows them to voice ideas, feelings and opinions, treats them with respect, values their contribution and lets parents make a contribution to the educational process.’*

From **‘Responding to Child Abuse’**

### **Framework**

Key documents, which inform this policy are:

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

Our school procedures for safeguarding boys 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)

### **General Introduction**

It is recognised that teachers play an important role in identifying potential cases of child abuse. It is also important that all relevant agencies involved in child abuse cooperate together for the benefit of the child. At Elmhurst, for child protection, the Head will be the designated Child Protection Officer (including for the EYFS) and he will liaise with Social Service departments and teachers in school for this purpose. The deputy CPO will be the Principal. For this procedure to work, it relies on the skills and expertise of every class teacher and adult within school to recognise or report concerns. This policy will be subject to annual review. The designated Child Protection Officer will receive appropriate training every two years.

All members of staff will receive appropriate training once every three years to develop their:

- understanding of signs and indicators of abuse, (appendix 2)
- understanding of how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, (appendix 2).
- understanding of the procedures to be followed in sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse, (appendix 3).

Part-time and voluntary staff will be made aware of safeguarding arrangements.

At Elmhurst, all staff should have total commitment to child protection. As such the school operates safe recruitment procedures and all staff, before commencing their employment with the school, undergo appropriate child protection checks. This will apply to all staff who come into contact with pupils of the school.

Recruitment advertisements will include a child protection statement. DfES List 99 check; Criminal Records Bureau checks; identity checks and qualification checks will be carried out in accordance with the DCSF guidance “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” 2007.

The Principal and Head will complete the National College for School Leadership online training in Safer Recruitment and ensure that safe recruitment procedures are followed.

A central record of checks will be maintained and reviewed regularly by the Head.

Staff raise boys’ awareness about themselves through Personal and Social Education, Health Education, and develop a trusting climate so that children feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings.

Elmhurst has a policy of partnership between home and school, but with child abuse, or suspicion of child abuse, our first and only responsibility is to the child. This may mean that parents are not informed or consulted in some instances. We may not be able to prevent child abuse, but by following child protection procedures, we are trying our best to protect all our pupils and this is our first and only responsibility.

All staff make sure, through their care of the boys, to try to ensure that boys keep safe, and remain healthy. Suspected cases are reported, procedures adhered to and subsequent actions are left to the appropriate agencies. We should also care for pupils who have been abused and try to understand their problems.

### **Records and monitoring**

Well kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a boy/boys within our school, the need to keep child protection records separate from the main school file and in a locked cabinet, and when they should be passed to other agencies.

### **Extended schools and lettings –the use of school premises by other organisations.**

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Head will seek written assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

### **Confidentiality**

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

The Designated Senior Person will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a pupil to keep secrets which might compromise the pupil’s safety or well-being or that of another.

We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a boy to Children's Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the boy at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

### **Physical Intervention/Positive Handling**

Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately, as part of our Physical Restraint Policy and Behaviour Policy. It complies with the DCSF non - statutory guidance

“Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils” 2007 which is available on Teachernet. This guidance replaces Circular 10/98, which should no longer be used.

Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under the disciplinary procedures.

### **Bullying** - (refer to school's anti-bullying policy document)

Our procedures on the prevention and management of bullying are set out in a separate policy; we acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to under achievement for our pupils.

### **Aims**

By following child protection procedures we:

- Care for the boy
- Care for our school
- Care for the community we serve
- Respond to the guidelines and procedures of other agencies

### **Guidelines**

In reporting concern or suspicion, all adults in school must follow the following procedures. The Head will then follow the Croydon Child Protection Procedures.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements in the school will be remedied without delay.

### **Reasons for Following Procedures**

- It protects the pupil to the best of our ability
- It avoids delay
- It provides consistency
- It protects all staff
- It ensures that, if further action is taken by another agency, then the school has followed the protection procedures

Staff are in contact with our boys all day and are in a position to detect possible abuse. They must not think that by voicing concern they are necessarily starting procedures. The criteria should be that they have ‘*reasonable suspicion*’ and under the Children Act, 1989, this definition has been extended to include ‘*or may suffer in future*’.

Staff have an important role in hearing what the boys have to say. The school can provide a neutral place where the boy feels it is safe to talk. Sensitivity to the disclosure is vital. Staff must listen carefully to what the boy is saying, treat it seriously, and value what they say.

Boys may feel they will not be believed, or that they will be punished. Staff will need to assure them that whatever has happened it is not their fault. Fear of the consequences of telling is very common. It can be very tempting to offer a promise of confidentiality to the pupil. This is not realistic. The child needs to hear the truth about what will happen, together with a commitment to support the child. It is crucial not to ask leading questions. Our role is to enable the pupil in our care to speak and then know what to do next.

A list of pupils causing concern will be kept by the Head. This will include all boys, who, for whatever reason, need to be monitored. Staff are kept informed of any boy in their class who is on this register. Teachers must inform the Head of any changes/additions so that this list can be kept up to date.

## Signs and Symptoms

Signs and symptoms may be separated into four Child Protection categories as follows:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

<b>Appendix 1 – Types of abuse and their symptoms</b>
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### 1.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical Abuse - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unexplained injuries – bruises / abrasions / lacerations</li> <li>▪ The account of the accident may be vague or may vary from one telling to another.</li> <li>▪ Unexplained burns</li> <li>▪ Regular occurrence of unexplained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Withdrawn or aggressive behavioural extremes</li> <li>▪ Uncomfortable with physical contact</li> <li>▪ Seems afraid to go home</li> <li>▪ Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably</li> </ul>

<p>injuries Most accidental injuries occur on parts of the body where the skin passes over a bony protrusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather, in order to cover body.</li> <li>▪ The interaction between the child and its carer</li> </ul>
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## 1.2 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.

Neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- ❖ Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- ❖ Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ❖ Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ❖ Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Neglect - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unattended medical need</li> <li>▪ Underweight or obesity</li> <li>▪ Recurrent infection</li> <li>▪ Unkempt dirty appearance</li> <li>▪ Smelly</li> <li>▪ Inadequate / unwashed clothes</li> <li>▪ Consistent lack of supervision</li> <li>▪ Consistent hunger</li> <li>▪ Inappropriately dressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor social relationships</li> <li>▪ Indiscriminate friendliness</li> <li>▪ Poor concentration</li> <li>▪ Low self-esteem</li> <li>▪ Regularly displays fatigue or lethargic</li> <li>▪ Frequently falls asleep in class</li> <li>▪ Frequent unexplained absences</li> </ul>

## 1.3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development, and may involve:

- ❖ Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- ❖ Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- ❖ Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- ❖ Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children;
- ❖ Exploiting and corrupting children.

Emotional Abuse - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor attachment relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low self-esteem</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unresponsive / neglectful behaviour towards the child’s emotional needs</li> <li>▪ Persistent negative comments about the child.</li> <li>▪ Inappropriate or inconsistent expectations</li> <li>▪ Self harm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unhappiness, anxiety</li> <li>▪ Withdrawn, insecure</li> <li>▪ Attention seeking</li> <li>▪ Passive or aggressive behavioural extremes</li> </ul>
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#### 1.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual Abuse - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sign of blood / discharge on the child’s underclothing.</li> <li>▪ Awkwardness in walking / sitting</li> <li>▪ Pain or itching – genital area</li> <li>▪ Bruising, scratching, bites on the inner thighs / external genitalia.</li> <li>▪ Self harm</li> <li>▪ Eating disorders</li> <li>▪ Enuresis / encopresis</li> <li>▪ Sudden weight loss or gain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sexually proactive behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with the child’s age &amp; understanding.</li> <li>▪ Drawings &amp; or written work that is sexually explicit</li> <li>▪ Self harm / Suicide attempts</li> <li>▪ Running away</li> <li>▪ Substance abuse</li> <li>▪ Significant devaluing of self</li> <li>▪ Loss of concentration</li> </ul>

### *Appendix 2* – Handling disclosures of abuse

If a child discloses abuse or staff are suspicious:

- Report immediately to the CPO (Head). In the absence of the Head, all concerns should be discussed with the Deputy Child Protection Officer (Principal).
- In general the staff should seek to discuss any concerns about a boy’s welfare with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to making referral to children’s social care. However this should only be done where it will not place the pupil at increased risk of significant harm.
- Do not promise the child that it will be kept a secret
- Make a written record of the information, where possible in the boy’s own words stating when the alleged incident took place, who was present and what was said to have happened.

It is very important in these cases that prompt and correct procedures are followed under Protection Procedures.

The reporting teacher will be told of any further action taken i.e. Social Service referral, etc. If the reported case is taken up and investigated by an external agency, then any meetings, case conferences or action taken will be followed through and the teacher concerned informed.

The following should be considered as practical procedures and guidance to be followed in the event of such a disclosure:

- ❖ Always stop & listen to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse, without displaying shock & disbelief.
- ❖ Take the boy seriously. Always assume that he is telling the truth.
- ❖ Do not promise confidentiality; you have a duty to refer to the designated senior person for child protection if 'child in need'.
- ❖ Do reassure and alleviate guilt, for example you could say; "you are not to blame." or "You have done the right thing to tell someone."
- ❖ Do not ask leading questions, for example, "What did she do next?" (this assumes that she/he did) or "Did he touch your private part". The boy may well have to tell the story again, and to do so repeatedly will cause undue stress.
- ❖ In cases where criminal proceedings occur, such questioning can cause evidence to become invalid.
- ❖ Do not ask the boy to repeat the incident for another member of staff.
- ❖ End by summarising what has been said and what action has been agreed.
- ❖ Be clear about what you intend to do next.
- ❖ Record carefully what has been said and what actions have been agreed.
- ❖ Discuss your concern/disclosure with the designated Child Protection Officer at the school.

### **Procedure for responding to allegations or complaints against staff**

In the event that a member of staff, either paid or voluntary has an allegation made against them the following procedures will be followed:

If a pupil reports an allegation, the person who receives the information will:

- Treat the matter as above

- Treat the matter seriously, avoid asking **leading questions**, communicate with the boy in a manner appropriate to the his understanding and communication style
- Make a written record of the information, where possible in the boy's own words stating when the alleged incident took place, who was present and what was said to have happened.
- The record should be signed and dated

The person receiving the information will report the matter immediately to the Head (Child Protection Officer), or, where the allegation involves the Head, to the Principal, Mr Wickham.

The Head on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Lead Officer for Safeguarding in Education before discussing the details with the member of staff concerned.

Where the allegation made is against the Head, the Principal will become the Designated CPO, until the allegation is resolved.

Where a parent/carer or other adult reports an allegation, initial action will not be to investigate the matter by interviewing the accused, the child making the allegation or any of the potential witnesses. The Head will deal with the allegation and any action carried out is in discussion with the LA safeguarding in Education officer.

Any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children will be reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

### **Croydon Child Protection Procedures**

These procedures are to be followed in reported abuse cases or suspicion of abuse. Copies of the procedure are held by the Head.

Central to all procedures for child abuse is a case conference. The following people and agencies may be invited to attend:

- Social Services
- Medical Officer
- NSPCC
- Probation Service
- Police

### **Other agencies which may be involved:**

Clinical or Educational psychologist

Consultant Psychiatrist (if hospital is concerned)

Head or designated teacher

Headteacher from siblings' school

Community worker if appropriate

Recognised voluntary organisations

Emergency duty team (Social Service)

Sexual abuse cases are investigated by the Police. Social Services can be present to assist the Police when interviewing a child.

### **Contact Procedures**

If an allegation made meets any of the Safeguarding Criteria, the Designated CPO will report it to the Local Authority Designated Officer within 24 hours using the following contact details:

020 8726 6400

9am – 7pm Monday

8am – 6pm Tuesday - Friday

If a concern or an allegation requiring immediate attention is received outside normal office hours, the Designated CPO should consult straight away with the Local Authority Designated Officer using the following contact details:

0208 726 6000

### **Review of this policy**

The Elmhurst policy for Child Protection is subject to a formal annual review by the Principal in consultation with the Head.

The policy was reviewed on Wednesday June 1<sup>st</sup> 2011. The date of the next review is due June 2012.

**Appendix 3** – Procedures to be followed if you have a concern about a child’s welfare

