

The Mill Academy

Safeguarding and Child

Protection Policy



September 2023

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AIMS OF THIS POLICY

To ensure that children are effectively safeguarded from the potential risk of harm at The Mill Academy and that the safety and well-being of the children is of the highest priority in all aspects of the school's work. To help the school maintain its ethos whereby staff, pupils, parents and governors feel able to articulate any concerns comfortably, safe in the knowledge that effective action will be taken as appropriate.

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

To ensure that all members of the school community:

- are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- know the procedures that should be followed if they have a cause for concern.
- know where to go to find additional information regarding safeguarding.
- are aware of the key indicators relating to child abuse.
- fully support the school's commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

1 PRINCIPLES

1.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2011 gives maintained schools a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, and have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State

1.2 This school recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, and protect them from harm, and respond to child abuse.

1.3 We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged.

1.4 We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our teaching and learning, extracurricular activities, pastoral care and extended school activities. In order to achieve this, all members of staff (including volunteers and governors) in this school, in whatever capacity, will at all times act proactively in child welfare matters especially where there is a possibility that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

1.5 The school seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The school hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

1.6 Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot promise secrecy if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

1.7 In our school, if we have suspicions that a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being is being, or is likely to be, harmed, or that they are being neglected, we will take appropriate action in accordance with the procedures issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.

1.8 As a consequence, we assert that teachers and other members of staff (including volunteers) in the school are an integral part of the child safeguarding process;

- accept totally that safeguarding children is an appropriate function for all members of staff in the school, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities.
- recognise that safeguarding children in this school is a responsibility for all staff, including volunteers, and the Governing body;
- will ensure through training and supervision that all staff and volunteers in the school are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and know how to report concerns or suspicions;
- will designate a senior member of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns. He or she will act as a source of expertise and advice, and is responsible for coordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies; ensure (through the designated member of staff) that staff with designated responsibility for child protection will receive appropriate training to the minimum standard set out by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- will share our concerns with others who need to know, and assist in any referral process;
- will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers who have suspicion that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, refer such concerns to the Designated member of staff, who will refer on to Children's Social Care in accordance with the procedures issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- safeguard the welfare of children whilst in the school, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, disability or special educational needs, cyber bullying or Internet technologies
- will ensure that all staff are aware of the child protection procedures established by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership and, where appropriate, the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them;
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees that all people who work in our school are suitable to work with children,
- will act swiftly and make appropriate referrals where an allegation is made that a member of staff has committed an offence against a child, harmed a child, or acted in a way that calls into question their suitability for working with children.

2 DESIGNATED MEMBER OF STAFF

2.1 The designated senior member of staff (designated person) for safeguarding protection in this school is: **Mrs Rachel Chambers**

2.2 In their absence, these matters will be dealt with by: **Miss Kirsty Glyde or Mrs Gillian Beckett**

2.3 The designated person is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

2.4 The school recognises that:

- the designated person need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the school management structure to carry out the duties of the post – they must therefore be a senior member of staff in the school.
- all members of staff (including volunteers) must be made aware of who this person is and what their role is. Volunteers and new staff are informed of this information at induction.

Signs are also placed around school sharing this information.

- The designated person will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within the school over child protection cases
- The designated person will need to liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies.
- They should possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns.
- Appropriate training and support should be given.
- The designated person is the first person to whom members of staff report concerns.
- The designated person is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The designated person is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff, unless the designated person is also the headteacher.

2.5 To be effective they will:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm.
- Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Where they have concerns that a referral has not been dealt with in accordance with the child protection procedures, ask the Head of Safeguarding to investigate further.
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the school, and regular visitors (such as Education Welfare Officers, Connexions personal advisors, trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can access readily, this policy.
- Liaise with the head teacher (if not head teacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role.

- Ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated governor for child protection regarding this.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place.
- Ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals. Raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child.
- Where children leave the school roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible but within the 5 days for an in year transfer or within the first 5 days of a start of a new term to allow the new school to have the support in place for when the child arrives. Wherever possible this should include a face to face discussion and handover of the records. Both schools should sign a form to confirm the handover of the records.
- Where a child leaves and the new school is not known, ensure that the local authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing pupils. Elective home education duty to refer to Local Authority.

2.5 The designated person also has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. They should:

- Attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case
- Have a working knowledge of how Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership operates and the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these when required, to enhance the implementation of the Child Protection Plan. Attend any relevant or refresher training courses and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and governors.
- Make themselves (and any deputies) known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in child protection. This should be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the designated teacher immediately.

3 DESIGNATED GOVERNOR

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding at this school is **Mrs Louise Wylie**

3.1 Where appropriate, the Governor will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

3.2 The Governor will ensure that the designated member of staff for child protection is given sufficient time to carry out his or her duties, including accessing training.

3.3 The Governor will review safeguarding practices in the school on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:

- The school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school;
- Hold a termly monitoring meeting with designated safeguarding lead with an agreed focus.

- Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practices in this matter, and that staff receive training where appropriate;
- Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers
- The school follows the procedures agreed by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership, and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
- Only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the school, or work here in a voluntary capacity
- Where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are raised, take appropriate action in line with BSCP Allegations against Staff Procedures and BMBC Disciplinary Procedures.

4 RECRUITMENT

4.1 In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

4.2 We accept that it is our responsibility to follow the guidance set out in “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” in particular we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school:

- Identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be
- Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
- Professional and character references prior to offering employment
- Satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.
- DBS and Barred list checks and disqualification checks will also be completed
- The process should also confirm that the Preventing Illegal Working Declaration of entitlement to work in the UK is completed.
- Prohibition list checks for teachers
- Section 128 checks will be completed where appropriate
- Online checks will also be completed for shortlisted candidates

5 VOLUNTEERS

5.1 We understand that some people are unsuitable for working with children and may use volunteering to gain access to children therefore every volunteer will be recruited in line with the Trust Volunteers Policy.

6 INDUCTION & TRAINING

6.1 All new members of staff will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.

6.2 All new staff at the school (including volunteers) will receive child protection information and a copy of this policy on starting their work at the school.

6.3 All staff will be expected to attend training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The school will provide access to training for all new staff .

6.4 Staff will attend refresher training every two years, and the designated person every two years.

6.5 Staff visiting the school for short periods of time e.g. 1 day supply cover, will receive information in relation to designated safeguarding and expected procedures. (See induction forms).

6.6 The school recognises that safeguarding is very important. All staff have suitable training for their role. Any volunteers are given a safeguarding briefing as part of their induction. They are told who the safeguarding lead in school is and how to report any concerns.

6.7 For staff that are unable to access face to face Safeguarding awareness training the school expects them to complete online training as above. All ECTs are expected to have completed Safeguarding awareness training prior to commencing their employment.

7 DEALING WITH CONCERNS

7.1 When dealing with concerns, St. Mary's Academy Trust and all of its Schools recognise that children with special education needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges, and that it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that all staff are appropriately trained to recognise such barriers.

7.2 All staff will be made aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (child in need) and section 47 (child protection) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

7.3 It is not the responsibility of any member of staff or volunteer to investigate any suspicions or concerns that a child/young person is at risk of or is suffering significant harm.

7.4 Their concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and should also be recorded using the school's Cause for Concern documentation system, i.e. CPOMS.

7.5 A Cause for Concern is an action, observation or discussion that makes you feel anxious about the safety or wellbeing of a child.

7.6 All causes for concern **must be recorded** on the Cause for Concern record and must be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

7.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on the appropriate actions, following up on the concern with the appropriate actions.

7.8 All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

7.9 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider if the issue needs to be passed to Children's Social Care Assessment and Joint Investigation Team for further action via a telephone conversation and the Record of Contact procedure.

7.10 A Vulnerable Pupil file will also be raised using the school's system for recording safeguarding concerns.

7.11 All discussions, telephone calls and meetings in relation to the child/young person must be recorded in writing using the school's safeguarding system.

7.12 The Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputy safeguarding leaders and other appropriate professionals within the school where appropriate (for example members of the school's welfare team), will hold a monthly meeting to discuss and review all records. Statistics will be shared with the LGB and the Trust Board. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then be able to:

- Monitor that the agreed actions have taken place.
- Assess the impact of the actions and the progress being made.
- Agree the next steps.
- Consider when an Early Help Assessment needs to be completed in order to facilitate and coordinate multi-agency support and lead on liaising with other agencies as appropriate.
- Quality assure the written records.
- Collate an anonymised report for the Governing body outlining the level of child protection concerns and work being undertaken. This report should not include the personal data of any individuals or families.
- Ensure that clear actions are followed up where there is a Child Protection Plan in place and the outcomes are monitored.
- Ensure school is represented at Core Groups and Conferences.

7.13 The documentation for each child/young person must be stored in a secure place with restricted access in accordance with the retention schedule. In schools where an electronic storage system is used (Cpoms) full access to the system should be restricted to Designated Safeguarding Leads only. Access to the site and the permissions should be monitored regularly.

8 SAFEGUARDING IN SCHOOL

8.1 As well as ensuring that we address child protection concerns, we will also ensure that children who attend the school are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.

8.2 To this end, this policy must be seen in light of the school's policies on:

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education

- Behaviour, with particular reference to the anti-bullying section (the school will also ensure that bullying and racial harassment is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, or bullying that is homophobic in nature, cyber bullying or where there appear to be links to domestic abuse in the family home. Incidents of bullying will be investigated, recorded through the Cause for Concern Process and reported to the Local Authority on the electronic recording system)
- Safer recruitment
- Code of conduct for staff
- Exclusions
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health & Safety
- Positive Handling
- Allegations against members of staff
- E-safety
- Whistle Blowing
- Visitors' policy
- Induction policy
- Information sharing policy
- Intimate care
- Children Missing in Education
- Acceptable Use policy
- Low Level Concerns policy

9.PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN

9.1 We understand that parents like to take photos of, or video record their children in the school play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.

9.2 However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

9.3 When staff use any mobile devices (laptops / tablets / mobile phones / USB devices etc.) in school, they will follow the rules set out in the Acceptable Use Policy agreement, in the same way as if they were using school / Trust equipment.

9.4 We will not allow others (visitors to school e.g. theatre groups or workshop providers) to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without the parent's permission.

9.5 We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

9.6 The school cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions.

9.7 At the start of each academic year parental consent to the taking and use of photographs and videos will be updated for each pupil.

9.8 The allowing of photographs and videos at any school event will be at the discretion of the Headteacher. The Headteacher should put into place any steps deemed appropriate to ensure the safeguarding of children in relation to photography at school events, including sending out letters to parents/making announcements to parents prior to events regarding rules or restrictions on photography, including asking parents/carers not to post photographs of other children on social media sites.

10 CONFIDENTIALITY INFORMATION STORAGE AND SHARING

10.1 The school, and all members of staff at the school, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.

10.2 The school will ensure that all confidential documentation is kept in a secure locked place. Access to this area will be limited to safeguarding leads. Documentation will not be taken out of the school premises unless to support with a child protection meeting.

10.3 Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.

10.4 Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the designated member of staff for child protection.

10.5 Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation as this may ultimately not be in the best interest of the child

10.6 Whilst Data Protection regulations place duties on organisation and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they are not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.

11 CONDUCT OF STAFF

11.1 The school has a duty to ensure that high standards of professional behaviour exist between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

11.2 At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- cultural and gender stereotyping
- dealing with sensitive information
- giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
- contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites.
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties

- Giving lifts to children alone and in their own car

11.3 If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, we will view this as misconduct, and take appropriate action

11.4 An agreed code of conduct in relation to safeguarding has been agreed and adopted by all adults working with children at The Mill Academy

Any member of staff who does not adhere to the policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures

11.5 An agreed Whistle Blowing policy in relation to safeguarding (appendix 1) to supplement to the Trust corporate policy has been agreed in order to support the Trust ethos where pupils and staff can talk freely about concerns knowing they will be listened to and appropriate action taken.

11.6 There are a range of mechanisms in place to ensure that pupils feel comfortable to express their concerns to adults for example:

- Through encouragement to discuss issues at collective worships
- Via the school council meetings

An open approach to discussing issues with staff

12 PHYSICAL CONTACT AND RESTRAINT

12.1 Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff will only do this in line with school policy. See Positive Handling Policy.

13 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF

13.1 If anyone makes an allegation that any member of staff (including any volunteer or Governor) may have:

- Possibly committed an offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they worked regularly or directly with children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

13.2 The allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by BMBC and the Trust disciplinary procedure.

13.3 The head teacher, rather than the designated member of staff will handle such allegations, unless the allegation is against the head teacher, when the chair of governors will handle the school's response.

13.4 The head teacher (or chair of governors) will collate basic information about the allegation, and report these without delay to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO will discuss the concerns and offer advice and guidance on how the situation will be managed and if a strategy meeting will be required.

14 BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- 14.1 Schools may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, schools should follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.
- 14.2 For school organised trips or visits which include an overnight stay, there must be a member of staff in attendance who has completed full Designated Safeguarding Lead training.

15 CONTRACTED SERVICES

15.1 Where the Governing Bodies contracts its services to outside providers, we will ensure that these providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the provider.

16 PARENTS & CARERS

16.1 This policy will be available to download from the school website. Paper copies are available on request from the school office.

17 PROVISION TO HELP PUPILS STAY SAFE

17.1 Safeguarding permeates through all aspect of the wider school curriculum. The following examples are not exhaustive but give a flavour for how safeguarding is promoted at The Mill Academy.

Through a more personalised RHSE programme that specifically meets the needs of our children, they learn to engage with others in a safe and mutually respectful way. Our robust anti-bullying policy is reinforced regularly. Any incidents of bullying are recorded and parents informed. Pupils who have particular needs or difficulties in these areas are supported by a range of social and emotional support strategies and programmes, as well as receiving additional individual support from parents and staff. Outside agencies are also used to support children with specific needs e.g. art therapy.

Initiatives such as, Sports leaders and Pupil Council along with highly effective work with other agencies ensure that children are well-placed to keep themselves and other children safe in their everyday lives.

18 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

18.1 All adults in school will receive a copy of this policy and will be asked to sign to say that they have read and agree to follow its procedures. It will be discussed at least annually at staff meetings.

18.2 The effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed and evaluated the Governing Body annually in light of any specific incidents or changes to local/national guidance.

18.3 The designated governor for safeguarding will meet with the Headteacher termly to discuss the school's work in the area of safeguarding and report back to the full governing body.

18.4 The Headteacher will report on safeguarding matters through the termly report and safeguarding will be a standing item on the agenda at each full governing body meeting.

18.5 Parents will be consulted via the parents' questionnaires and pupils via the pupil council and surveys .

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Children: Whistle Blowing

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Head Teacher. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right

Reasons for whistleblowing

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistleblowing

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why
- Approach the Headteacher
- If your concern is about your immediate manager/Headteacher, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school, contact the Chair of Governors, Tracy Rodgers, the CEO of St Mary's Academy Trust or the Local Authority Designated Officer
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest

- Put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places- don't let matters rest
- Put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence

Self reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children

Further advice and support

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, HR department and/or your professional or trade union.

"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"

(reproduced with acknowledgement to "Sounding the Alarm" – Barnardos)

Appendix 2: Definitions and Symptoms of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse – physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

The list of symptoms given is not exhaustive or comprehensive but consists of frequently observed

symptoms. It is important to remember that most abuse involves more than one main type, for

example, sexual and emotional abuse may be recognised together. These symptoms, for example cuts and grazes, may also be accidental and not a sign of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Actual or risk of physical injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and factitious illness by proxy. This includes excessive punishment.

Symptoms:

Behaviour changes/wet bed/withdrawal/regression

Finger marks

Frequent unexplained injuries

Broken bones

Afraid of physical contact

Cuts and grazes

Violent behaviour during role play

Cigarette burns

Unwillingness to change clothes

Cowering

Aggressive language and use of threats

Bruising in unusual areas

Changing explanation of injuries

Not wanting to go home with parent or carer

Neglect

Actual or risk of persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation. Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Symptoms:

Lack of appropriate clothing

Dirty

Cold – complaining of Body sores

Hunger – complaining of

Urine smells

Unkempt hair

No parental interest

Not wanting to communicate

Behaviour problems

Attention seeking

Lack of respect

Often in trouble – police

Bullying

Use of bad language

Always out at all hours

Lack of confidence – low self-esteem

Stealing

Significantly underweight

Jealousy

Neglecting pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse

Child not provided with adequate shelter

Lack of medical care

Sexual Abuse

Actual or risk of sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature. The involvement of dependent, immature children and adolescents in activities to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Symptoms:

Inappropriate behaviour – language

Withdrawn

Change of behaviour Role play

Rejecting physical contact or demanding attention

Rocking

Physical evidence – marks, bruising

Knowledge

Pain going to toilet, strong urine

Stained underwear

Bruising/marks in genital area

Drawing – inappropriate knowledge

Relationships with other adults or children for example, being forward

Emotional Abuse

Actual or risk of severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. It is important to remember that all abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment.

Symptoms:

Crying Rocking

Withdrawn

Not wanting to socialise

Cringing

Bad behaviour

Aggression

Behaviour changes

Bribery by parent

Self infliction

Lack of confidence

Attention seeking

Isolation from peers – unable to communicate

Clingy

Afraid of authoritative figures

Treating others as you have been treated

Picking up points through conversation with children

Child on Child abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between children. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse, including those between children who are not currently attending our provision due to the need to self-isolate or due to restricted attendance at school during a National Lockdown. These are examples of child on child abuse:

- Bullying (including online bullying)

- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Consensual and non consensual sharing of nude and semi nude images and/or videos
- Up skirting

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical.

School staff, alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy, have to make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2023 states that ‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes:

- Procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse
- The systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously
- How allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with
- Clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported
- A recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported
- A statement which makes clear there should be a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children
- Recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously

At The Mill Academy, we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child’s emotional and mental health and well-being.

