

Heatherside Junior School Child Protection Policy 2024 to 2025

Policy Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

Definitions within this document:

Child Protection is an aspect of safeguarding, but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term **Staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and governors.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents, guardians and foster carers.

Abuse could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and / or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

Aims

- To provide Staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in so doing ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.

Principles and Values

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children have a right to be protected from harm.
- All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm in accordance with the guidance.

- We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.
- Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests.
- All adults working within the school should maintain professional curiosity if they are concerned about a child.

Leadership and Management

We recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can undermine good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process. In this school any individual can contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy (DDSL) if they have concerns about a young person. The DSL is Mrs Dunn and the deputy DSLs are Mrs Sarney, Mr Demblon and Mrs Allchurch. There is a nominated governor, Susie Lewington who will take leadership responsibility for safeguarding. The Chair of Governors (David Barnes) will receive reports of allegations against the headteacher and act on behalf of the Governing Body.

As an employer we follow safer recruitment guidance as set out in KCSiE 2024 including informing shortlisted candidates that online searches will be carried out.

Training

All staff in our school are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. All staff in our school are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. Training is provided as required with a briefing every year. Separate training is provided to all new staff on appointment. The DSL will attend training at least every other year to enable them to fulfil their role. Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings and then captured in the next whole school training. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance. Governor training is provided as required by KCSiE 2024

Referral

Following any concerns raised, the DSL will assess the information and consider if significant harm has happened or there is a risk that it may happen. If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm has been reached; or they are not clear if the threshold is met, then the DSL will contact Children's Social Care. If the DSL or DDSL is not available or there are immediate concerns, the staff member will refer directly to Children's Social Care. We will use guidance from the NSPCC to determine when to contact the police. Generally, the DSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral. However, there are situations where this may not be possible or appropriate, particularly when informing parents/carers may place the child at further risk. If a parent informs us of a concern about their own child, we will inform them of what action we will take with the information they provide.

N.B. The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the teacher to report directly to the police. The DSL should also be made aware.

Confidentiality

- We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners' (DfE 2024) guidance
- There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies who have a statutory duty for child protection.
- Information will only be shared with agencies who we have a statutory duty to share with or individuals within the school who 'need to know'.
- All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential

As a school we will educate pupils to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it through

- The content of the curriculum will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including child who are victims of abuse, and children with SEND
- A school ethos which helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.
- Every child having access to a 'trusted adult' in the school.

Dealing with concerns and allegations against staff

If a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff, this information will be recorded and passed to the headteacher Hannah Dunn. The headteacher will make an assessment to determine if the matter is a 'low level concern' or an 'allegation'. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted for all allegations and the relevant guidance will be followed. If the headteacher needs advice or guidance they will contact the LADO. If the allegation is against the headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO or Chair of Governors directly. (Annex 5)

Dealing with children abusing children

If a concern is raised that a child under 18 abusing another child under 18, the 'Child on Child Abuse' guidance will be followed (Annex 6)

Legal context

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002; the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014; the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2014; the Children Act 2004 & 1989

Guidance

Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership protocols and guidance and their procedures

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#)

[FGM Act 2003 Mandatory Reporting Guidance \(2016\)](#)

Policy review

As a school, we review this policy at least annually in line with DfE, HSCP and HCC and other relevant statutory guidance.

Date approved by governing body: 26th September 2024

Date of next review by governing body: September 2025