



Woolwich Polytechnic School POLYMAT

Safeguarding Children Policy

Reviewed by: Governors 5 October 2015

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Revision due: September 2016

Policy Statement

We recognise that the welfare of all children is paramount and that all children and young people; regardless of ability or culture, have equal rights of protection. We have a duty of care when they are in our charge and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities.

Child Protection Lead and Deputy

The responsibility of managing the safeguarding of children can be both demanding and challenging, and therefore must be appointed at managerial level to personnel who are available when we are operational.

Our lead for child protection is:

Name: Gwen Ward (Deputy Head Teacher)

Her deputies are: The Heads of Year

The Safeguarding Governor is Bob Janes

Their role is to oversee and ensure that our safeguarding children policy is fully implemented. These details will be made available to all adults, children and parents/carers by training, staff handbook, information in staff areas and enrolment information. This includes ensuring they and all staff receive child protection training as appropriate. The deputies will be available to support or cover for the nominated lead. They will also handle any complaints or allegations against the nominated lead if appropriate.

Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare (from DfES Guidance 2004)

'There are two aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They are:

- Arrangements to take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimized
- Arrangements to take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

Why do we need a Safeguarding Children Policy?

The five main outcomes for children as detailed in "Every Child Matters" agenda 2003 and subsequent Children Act 2004 are:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- economic well-being

Government guidance is clear that all organisations working with children, young people, families, parents and carers have responsibilities (see Appendix for References). It is important to remember that children and young people can also abuse and that such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

All organisations should:

- **have senior managers committed to safeguarding**
- **be clear about people's responsibilities**
- **check there are no known reasons preventing staff and volunteers working with children & young people**
- **procedures for safeguarding children and young people**
- **procedures for dealing with allegations against staff & volunteers**
- **make sure staff have training**
- **have agreements about working with other organisations and agencies**

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

Schools and colleges should:

- **create and maintain a safe learning environment for children and young people**
- **identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate**
- **contribute through the curriculum by developing children's understanding, awareness and resilience**

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007

“Children are individuals whose rights, needs and welfare are paramount.”

Children Act 1989

“All children, whatever their religious or cultural background , must receive the same care and safeguards with respect to abuse and neglect”

“Where there are concerns about the welfare of a disabled child, they should be acted uponin the same way as with any other child.”

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

All references and documents are available under “References” on the homepage of www.safechild.co.uk

Child Protection: Main Procedures

School policy is rooted in the structure outlined in 'What To Do If You Are Worried A Child is Being Abused'.

1. All staff should be aware and alert to signs of injury, distress, neglect or at risk of such, and should refer to the categories of concern given later. Staff should report any concerns raised through observation as well as dialogue with the Head of Year, **STAFF SHOULD ALWAYS SHARE CONCERNS HOWEVER SLIGHT THEY MAY BE.** The Head of Year will discuss the case with the Designated Teacher, currently the Deputy Head (Pastoral)). All schools are required to nominate a designated teacher regarding child protection - but it is important to stress that the necessary work relating to child protection is a team effort and will largely rest with the pastoral team, tutors being involved as appropriate.
2. When an initial disclosure is made staff should make every effort to reassure and support the child, aiming to create an atmosphere in which the child can talk freely. Staff will need to keep notes and find out as much as possible, without "leading" the child in making a statement. Colleagues must *never* undertake to keep the information to themselves, and must in fact state that we have to involve others when we believe a child is in any way at risk. Colleagues will reassure pupils that the school will take the necessary actions explaining carefully what these will be, ensuring that the child feels secure about this.
3. The Designated Teacher (Gwen Ward) or her Deputy (Jo Lumbis) should be informed immediately and the Head Teacher will be informed of all proposed and actual action.

Referral is made directly - by phone - to Social Services covering the child's home address

If it is out of hours then the Child Protection referral is made to the duty Social Worker. Full records of such calls must be logged including Date / Time / Worker spoken to, on each occasion.

4. Full records about the circumstances or the incident and /or disclosure should be kept and their confidential nature assured. Within 48 hours of a referral being made to Social Services the designated teacher in conjunction with the HOY will complete a written report which must be sent to Social Services, AAS , Ken Palmer at the Education Offices and the District Health Authority whilst copies are retained (sealed) for the school file and for the confidential Head Teachers file relating to child protection.
5. It may be necessary for the school to provide immediate support for the child whilst social services make arrangements to take further action and/or to interview the child. Such support as keeping the child in after school hours in a secure and reassured way will be provided by the Head of Year and Designated Teacher.
6. The School keeps a confidential record of all information pertaining to child protection and this will include case conference decisions which will be the main source of a child being placed on or taken off the Child Protection Register. Documentation relating to a specific pupil and child protection should be circulated in a sealed envelope.

THE CHILD PROTECTION STRUCTURE: SUMMARY

The following outline the main stages in child protection in terms of recognition, investigation, assessment and support.

In School Terms:

1. Recognition of abuse - may come from a range of sources - including observation, disclosure. Abuse may result either from an act of omission or from an act of commission.
2. Referral - is made to the District Office by the Designated Teacher and Head of Year following appropriate internal discussions and the Headmaster's sanctioning of the referral. The school has the responsibility of informing parents that a referral through child protection procedures is being made. Responsibility for further parental contact and investigation will be taken by Social Services.
A full written report will be submitted to Social Services *within 48 hours*. Detailed notes of all contacts with Social Services will be made from the outset of the referral.
3. Investigation and Initial Assessment are the responsibility of other agencies though information from the school will be used.
4. Child Protection Case Conference: The school will be represented here - usually by the Head of Year though in some circumstances the tutor will be able to undertake this representation.
5. The school will support the pupil through all other stages of child protection.
 - Know the procedures
 - Observe rules of confidentiality
 - Be aware and alert
 - Share concerns with relevant staff
 - Keep notes
 - Do not promise to keep information to yourself
 - Ensure the child is re-assured and secure
 - Follow the procedures carefully and swiftly

Categories of Concern

1. Children "in need", these children are defined in the 1989 Children Act as children whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of services.
2. Significant Harm, this is when a child is maltreated to the point where harm has occurred or is likely to occur.
3. Abuse or neglect. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children or young people may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting, usually by someone known to them or more rarely by a stranger.

Recognising Abuse

Physical:

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

Emotional:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed 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. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Definitions from "Keeping Children Safe in education, 2014"

Employment of Staff at Woolwich Polytechnic School

We adhere to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (SCB) Key Standards for Recruitment, Ofsted and SAFEchild guidelines for recruiting all staff, paid or unpaid by obtaining full personal details and application forms (not CVs) with particular relevance to previous work with children and young people.

We always take up two written references and insist that any appointment, where staff has direct and/or unsupervised access to children and young people, will only be confirmed subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check at the appropriate level. ISA numbers are being phased in for all those work with vulnerable groups over a 5 year period from July 2010.

At interview we have sound procedures and recording to ensure we are satisfied, and can evidence that the applicant is appropriate and suitable, (please refer to the School's Safeguarding in Recruitment Policy).

At least one person on each interview panel will have undertaken the CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council) Safer Recruitment Online Training at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk

Teacher Conduct and Allegations against Staff

This avoids misunderstandings and allows all staff to challenge behaviour from colleagues, which falls outside of this code. It provides a 'safer' school for children and staff.

Abuse of Trust

All education staff need to know that inappropriate behaviour with or towards children is unacceptable. In particular, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where a child is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child.

Physical contact with Pupils /restraint

Teachers have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances.

Allegations against staff

DfE provides guidance about procedures aimed at striking a balance between the need to protect child from abuse and the need to protect staff from false or unfounded accusations.

The school Child Protection Policy should include allegations against staff.

Reporting cases to the Secretary of State

Cases must be reported to the Secretary of state if a person ceases to work in an education setting and there are grounds for believing he or she may be unsuitable to work with children, or may have committed misconduct.

Induction & Training

All Staff at Woolwich Polytechnic School undergo Child Protection Training at least every three years and those with particular Child Protection responsibilities will be updated on a regular basis

Confidentiality

We fully endorse the principal that the welfare of children and young people over-ride any obligations of confidence we may hold to others. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a “need to know” basis. Under “whistleblowing” anyone in our organisation may refer directly to either children’s social care services or the police if they are concerned that a child is at risk of harm and this policy is not being adhered to.

Handling Disclosures

A disclosure may be made verbally or through play or through the behaviour by a child, young person or an adult and it is important for everyone to remember the following:

If you are concerned about a child it is important that this information is communicated to the child protection lead and a deputy.

You may become aware of suspected or likely abuse by:

- Your own observations and concerns;
- Being told by another person that they have concerns about a child;
- The child tells you;
- The abuser tells you.

Also remember that you may not always be working directly with the child but become concerned because of difficulties experienced by the adults e.g.

- Domestic violence incidents
- Mental health issues
- Substance and alcohol abuse Incidents

Other concerns may be:

- Children living away from home or gone missing
- Peer abuse including bullying
- Race and racism
- Violent extremism
- Sexual exploitation

- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Concealed pregnancy
- Child trafficking
- E-Safety

Remember:

- Do not delay.
- Do not investigate.
- Seek advice from the child protection lead or deputy.
- Make careful recording of anything you observe or are told.

ADDENDUM TO SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Guidance to Staff using peer mentors, and sixth form students to assist with classes or activities

1. Pupils helping in class
2. E-safety protocols
3. Use of pupils/students to small groups
4. General briefing of pupils/students

At Woolwich Polytechnic School we celebrate pupil success in academic, social and personal development and believe that the use of peer teaching, peer mentoring and support is central to this. We must however be mindful of safeguarding arrangements in encouraging such activities.

1. Pupils/Students helping in any class. Pupils/Students must be supervised at all times and should not be allowed to develop “strong” individual relationships with pupils.
2. Pupils/Students working with small groups. All such activities must be supervised at all times, no pupils/students can be allowed to work unsupervised with small groups.
3. Pupils/Students working with individuals. No pupil/student should be allowed to work on a 1:1 basis with another student without direct adult supervision.

E –Safety

It is not appropriate for students to develop e-connexions with younger pupils. Staff are expected to discourage such relationships. It is a given that staff do not develop these relationships themselves.

Briefing Pupils on Safeguarding maybe an Issue

All students should be briefed on protecting themselves from allegations through.

- a) Never being in situation where they are alone with individual or small groups of students
- b) Never giving personal phone numbers or personal email addresses or allowing social media connections with younger pupils.
- c) Being generally careful in how they behave and communicate with younger pupils.

Policy Date

This policy was agreed and disseminated on 15th September 2014 and will be reviewed annually or when there are substantial organisational changes.

Policy Review Date: September 2015

Signed: G Ward

Lead for child protection: G Ward

Deputy for child protection: J Lumbis

Chair/Senior Manager/Director: B Janes

Date: October 2015

A separate record for staff signatures should be maintained to evidence they have seen and understand this policy

References

Note, all references can be found in the reference section at www.safechild.co.uk

Web Sites

www.safechild.co.uk

www.cqc.org.uk

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk

www.dcsf.gov.uk

www.dh.gov.uk

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

www.isa-gov.org.uk

www.justice.gov.uk

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Own SCB (Safeguarding Children Board) website