Safeguarding Policy

October 2015

Discussed by Management/Proprietors: 23.10.15
Disseminated to staff: 2.11.15
Review September 2016
INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of Bright Futures School.

Everyone working in or for our school service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting, and
- identifying children and 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 and in our school setting.

The Head of Learning (Alison Hughes) or, in her absence, the Head of Development (Zoe Thompson) has the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

SCHOOL COMMITMENT

Bright Futures School is committed to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of all of its pupils. Each pupil’s welfare 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 will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils.

Bright Futures School aims to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all children and adults feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously. Our school is committed to the principles outlined in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2015’ and implements policies, practices and procedures that promote safeguarding and the emotional and physical well being of children, young people and staff.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. It is an integral part of all activities, functions, culture and ethos of Bright Futures School.

Under the Education Act 2002 schools/settings have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and, in accordance with guidance set out in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015’ and ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015’, Bright Futures School will work in partnership with other organisations where appropriate to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them.

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THE CURRICULUM

All children have access to an appropriate curriculum which is broad and balanced and differentiated to meet their needs. This enables them to learn to develop the necessary skills to build self-esteem, respect others, defend those in need, resolve conflict without resorting to violence, question and challenge and to make informed choices in later life.

Children and young people are encouraged to express and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a variety of activities and have access to a range of cultural opportunities which promote the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect, understanding and empathy for others.

Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education, and humanities sessions will provide opportunities for children and young people to discuss and debate a range of subjects including lifestyles, forced marriage, family patterns, religious beliefs and practices and human rights issues.

Bright Futures School will take account of the latest advice and guidance provided to help address specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation eg CSE, Grooming, Radicalisation and Extremism, Forced Marriage.

All pupils will know that there are adults in the school who they can approach in confidence if they are in difficulty or feeling worried and that their concerns will be taken seriously and treated with respect.

ATTENDANCE

Bright Futures School views attendance as a safeguarding issue and in accordance with the school’s Attendance Policy, absences are rigorously pursued and recorded. The school, in partnership with the appropriate agencies, takes action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care.

The Attendance Policy identifies how individual cases are managed and how we work proactively with parents/carers to ensure that they understand why attendance is important.

We will implement the statutory requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children missing education (CME) and off rolling and understand how important this practice is in safeguarding children and young people.
**KEEPING RECORDS**

Bright Futures School will keep and maintain up to date information on children on the school roll including where and with whom the child is living, attainment, attendance, referrals to and support from other agencies. The school record (see also pupil profile) will also include a chronology of any other significant event in a child’s life.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Head of Learning, through consultation with the Proprietors will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are fully implemented and followed by all staff including volunteers.
- Safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers is practised.
- Designated Senior Members of staff for child protection are identified and receive appropriate on-going regular training.
- Sufficient time and resources are made available to enable the designated member of staff to discharge their responsibilities, including attending inter-agency meetings, contributing to the assessment of children and young people, supporting colleagues and delivering training as appropriate.
- All staff and volunteers receive appropriate training which is regularly updated.
- All temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school’s safeguarding policy and arrangements.
- All staff and volunteers feel safe about raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to the safeguarding and welfare of the children and young people and such concerns will be addressed sensitively and effectively.
- Parents/carers are aware of and have an understanding of the school’s responsibilities to promote the safety and welfare of its pupils by making its obligations clear in the school(setting prospectus.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on the school’s web-site.
- Ensure that the school is pro-active and co-operates with appropriate agencies and risk based approaches to ensure young people are safeguarded against any potential grooming activities which may attempt to draw them into harmful activities eg CSE and radicalization and extremism.

The Designated Person will:

Act as the first point of contact with regards to all safeguarding matters.

- Attend up-dated training every two years.
- Provide relevant information to the LA on how the school carries out its safeguarding duties.
- Provide support and training for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that the schools actions are in line with the Oldham LSCB Inter-Agency Procedures.
- Support staff to make effective referrals to the Children and Families Services and any other agencies where there are concerns about the welfare of a child.
- Keep copies of all referrals to Children and Families Services and any other agencies related to safeguarding children.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive information on safeguarding policies and procedures from the point of induction.
- Ensure that any staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children receive the appropriate training to undertake this role.
- Manage and keep secure the school’s safeguarding records.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and are aware of the school’s reporting and recording procedures and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child or an adult; including that they pass all concerns on to the DSPs central record, for consideration of patterns and themes.
- Liaise with the Proprietors about any safeguarding issues.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- Keep up to date with changes in local policy and procedures and are aware of any guidance issued by the DfE concerning Safeguarding.
- Send a pupil’s child protection or safeguarding file separately from the main file to a new establishment if a pupil leaves the school. Keep a copy of the file.

SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION of STAFF

The school’s recruitment and selection policies and processes adhere to the DfE guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” July 2015.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Staff ensure that confidentiality protocols are followed and information is shared appropriately. The Designated Member of Staff will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff and volunteers must understand that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff and volunteers must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

TRAINING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff should be made aware of the school’s safeguarding systems as part of their induction.

All staff should receive appropriate child protection training which includes the following:
- basic safeguarding information about the school’s policies and procedures
- signs and symptoms of abuse (emotional and physical)
- indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

In accordance with “Keeping children safe in education – July 2015” all staff will receive training at induction.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding (Alison Hughes) will receive refresher training every two years. All staff will receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated at staff meetings and training days.

All staff will be supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific safeguarding issues and will receive training or briefings on for example, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Trafficking and Preventing Violent Extremism.
INFORMING PARENTS/CARERS

Our approach to working with parents/carers is one of transparency and honesty and our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the children in our care. We aim to do this in partnership with our parents/carers. In most cases parents and carers will be informed when concerns are raised about the safety and welfare of their child. Parents and carers should be given the opportunity to address any concerns raised.

Parents and carers will usually be informed if a referral is to be made to the Children’s Social Care Service or any other agency. Parents/carers will not be informed if it is believed that by doing so would put the child at risk. In such cases the Designated Persons will seek advice from Children’s Social Care.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

The school is aware that children and young people’s development, as well as their social and emotional resilience, is affected by many factors including exposure to domestic abuse within the family situation and is a safeguarding issue.

Children and young people react to domestic abuse in similar ways to other types of abuse and trauma.

Information about Domestic Abuse and its effect upon children and young people will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings and the school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection’s Policies and Procedures will be used to protect children and young people exposed to, and at risk from, domestic abuse. Any child or young person thought to be at immediate risk will be reported without delay to the police service as a 999 emergency and the OLSB will be contacted as soon as possible.

FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced Marriage became a criminal offence in June 2014. It is a form of child, adult and domestic abuse and, in line with statutory guidance, is treated as such by this school. The school is sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and child-rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Child abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.

Information about Forced Marriage will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings and the school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies will be used to protect a victim or potential victim of forced marriage.

If a case of forced marriage is suspected it will be viewed as a safeguarding concern, parents and carers will not be approached or involved about a referral to any other agencies.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an illegal in the United Kingdom and is a violation of human rights of girls and women. Information on FGM will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings.
PREVENTING RADICALIZATION and VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Bright Futures School values the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, expression of beliefs and ideology and tolerance of others which are the core values of our democratic society. However, all rights come with responsibilities and free speech or beliefs designed to manipulate the vulnerable or which advocate harm or hatred towards others will not be tolerated. Bright Futures School seeks to protect its students and staff from all messages and forms of violent extremism and ideologies including those linked to, but not restricted, to the following: Far Right/Neo Nazi, White Supremacist ideology, extremist Islamic ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups and extremist Animal Rights groups.

Bright Futures School is clear that exploitation and radicalisation will be viewed as a safeguarding concern and will be referred to the appropriate safeguarding agencies.

E-SAFETY

Bright Futures School has an E-Learning Policy which recognises that E-safety is a safeguarding issue not an ICT issue and includes safety at home as well as in school. The purpose of internet use in school is to help raise educational standards, promote pupil achievement, and support the professional work of staff as well as enhance the school’s management information and business administration. The internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education, business and social interaction and Bright Futures School has a duty to provide children and young people with quality access as part of their learning experience.

It is the duty of Bright Futures School to ensure that every child and young person in its care is safe and this applies equally to the ‘virtual’ or digital world. Bright Futures School will ensure that appropriate filtering methods are in place to ensure that pupils are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material.

TAKING ACTION TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN ARE SAFE AT SCHOOL AND AT HOME

All staff follow the Oldham LSCB Child Protection Procedures which are consistent with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children- 2015’ and ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ It is not the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly all concerns regarding the welfare of pupils will be recorded and discussed with the designated senior person with responsibility for child protection (or another senior member of staff in the absence of the designated person) prior to any discussion with parents.

1. 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)

2. Responding to Disclosure
Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents or other members of the public. School recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Staff have roles, training and support to ensure pupils with autism are able to discuss issues and concerns with staff in safety and with confidence.
Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the designated person and make a detailed record. Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the designated person in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff will:
• listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm
• try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of school staff
• clarify the information
• try to keep questions to a minimum and of an ‘open’ nature e.g. ‘Can you tell me what happened ?’ rather than ‘Did x hit you?’
• try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
• not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
• explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person
• reassure and support the person as far as possible
• explain that only those who ‘need to know’ will be told
• explain what will happen next and that the person will be involved as appropriate

3. Action by the Designated Senior Person- Alison Hughes (or Zoe Thompson in her absence)
Following any information raising concern, the senior designated person will consider:
• any urgent medical needs of the child
• making an enquiry to the MASH team to find out if the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan by ringing - 0161 770 3790
• discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family
• consulting with appropriate persons e.g. ESW service, Social Care
• the child’s wishes

Then decide:
• wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk
• whether to make a child protection referral to the Children Assessment Team(0161 770 3790 ) or for children over 16 –( 0161 770 6599) because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately
OR
• not to make a referral at this stage
• if further monitoring is necessary
• if it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment (e.g. CAF) and/or make a referral for other services
All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented. All referrals to social care will be accompanied by a standard referral form.

4. Action following a child protection referral

The designated senior person or other appropriate member of staff will:
- *make regular contact with the Social worker involved to stay informed*
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection Conference
- if the child or children are placed on the Child Protection Register, contribute to the Child Protection Plan and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Child Protection Conferences
- where possible, share all reports with parents prior to meetings
- where in disagreement with a decision made e.g. not to apply Child Protection Procedures or not to convene a Child Protection Conference, discuss this with the Safeguarding Officer for Learning or the Manager of the Child Protection and Review Unit
- where a child on the child protection register moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in Social Care

5. Recording and monitoring

Accurate records will be made as soon as practicable using the Bright Futures Disclosure form and will clearly distinguish between observation, fact, opinion and hypothesis. All records will be signed and dated, any information given will be recorded verbatim where possible and a note made of the location and description of any injuries seen.

All C.P. documents will be retained in a ‘Child Protection’ file, separate from the child’s main file. This will be locked away and only accessible to the Head Of Learning/Development and senior designated person. These records will be copied and transferred to any school or setting the child moves to, clearly marked ‘Child Protection, Confidential, for attention of Designated Person Child Protection.’ 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 Education Social Work Service. Original copies will be retained until the child’s 25th birthday.

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We will follow the government guidance “Keeping children safe in education” when dealing with allegations. Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely in staff files.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Head Of Learning / Development and make a record.
- In the event that an allegation is made against the Head Of Learning the matter will be reported to the proprietors who will proceed as the Head Of Learning.
- The Head Of Learning/ Development will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs
• The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children
• The Head Of Learning/ Development may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation, however no person will be interviewed at this stage
• The Head Of Learning/ Development will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (See Contacts) 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
• Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and staff
• The Head of Learning / Development will inform the proprietors of any allegation.

COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS BY PUPILS, STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

Any concern or expression of disquiet made by a child or adult at Bright Futures School will be listened to seriously and acted upon as quickly as possible to safeguard his or her welfare. Bright Futures Staff should follow the school Grievance Procedure. The person who has expressed the concern/made the complaint will be kept informed about the action being taken and progress of the investigation and resolution.

CONTACTS

Oldham Local Safeguarding Children Board / Duty & Assessment Team (MASH): 0161 770 3790/91 (Children under 16) or 0161 770 6599/8 (children over 16)

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours): 0161 770 6936

Oldham Local Safeguarding Children Board Manager: 0161 770 8096 (Sue Harrison)

Local Authority Designated Officer: 0161 770 8870 - Colette Morris (LADO)

Children Missing Education: 0161 770 4201 (Pupil Tracking Team)

Greater Manchester Police: Child Protection Unit: 0161 872 5050

Definitions

As in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a child is anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18th birthday.

The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

**Significant Harm** means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another; Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; Health includes physical and mental health; Ill-treatment includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
Abuse and Neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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.

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. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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 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 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.

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 and clothing, 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 caretakers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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