

# Sydenham School Private Fostering Policy

To be reviewed February 2018



# Sydenham School – Private Fostering Policy

## 1. Introduction and Context

Most children and young people spend some time away from their home and stay with relatives and friends. Some of these children and young people may stay for longer and therefore special measures may apply. If a child or young person under 16 or under 18 and disabled, is living with a family member or friend for longer than 28 days this is seen as Private Fostering.

This does not have to be continuous and periods staying with family members or friends that add up to 28 days or longer in any period this may then be seen as Private Fostering. Private Fostering is an arrangement made by the parent with the carer who has agreed to look after the child or young person on their behalf. In some circumstances they may not have agreed to this or the circumstances of their living arrangements raises concerns.

### 1.1 Our Responsibilities

Sydenham School fully recognises its responsibilities for understanding what Private Fostering is, and know how to identify a child or young person who may be in a Private Fostering arrangement, we further understand that we have a duty to report this to the Local Authority if it is believed the child or young person is possibly living in such an arrangement.

### 1.2 Our Policy

Under the Children Act, 1989, the Local Authority has a duty to make sure the arrangement that the child or young person is in will provide for the child's or young person's needs and safeguard his or her welfare. Sydenham School will ensure all staff, governors and volunteers in the school are aware of this duty. If a member of staff, governor or volunteer becomes aware that a child or young person may be living in a Private Foster arrangement, it is the responsibility of that person to report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and this person may need to make further enquiries to try and establish this.

The Safeguarding Designated Lead should seek advice from Children's Social Care as to whether the child or young person is a privately fostered child under the regulations. If not already registered, a referral must be made to Children's Social Care. Essential information for making a referral includes:'

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- Full names and dates of birth for the child
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the current carer including mobiles
- The child's address and phone number
- Whereabouts of the child (and siblings)
- Child and family's ethnic origin
- Child and family's main language
- Actions taken and people contacted
- Special needs of the child, including need for an accredited interpreter, accredited sign language interpreter or other language support
- A clear indication of the family's knowledge of the referral and whether they have consented to the sharing of confidential information
- The details of the person making the referral

Other information that may be essential in a referral about a possible Privately Fostered child or young person includes:

- Address and daytime phone number of the parent/parental responsibility holder
- Address and phone numbers of any other family members
- Any other helpful information about the parent/parental responsibility to assist an understanding of why this child or young person is not living with them.

Sydenham School will work together with the Local Authority to help safeguard and promote the child's or young person's safety and welfare.

## **2. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff, volunteers and governors have responsibilities for the following:

- To ask parents/carers questions around their relationship with the child or young person if this is unclear, confusing or concerning
- To follow up any discussion with a child or young person about their living arrangement which is unclear, confusing or concerning
- To have robust consent/trips/outings letters which clearly define the child's relationship to the adult giving consent If a child or young person is living in a Private Fostering arrangement:
- To work with the Local Authority and carer to ensure the child's or young person's needs are being met, and to ensure the safety and welfare of that child or young person whilst being privately fostered

## **3. Management of the Policy**

The DSL will ensure all staff, governors and volunteers are aware and familiar with the legal requirements and duties.

The DSL will ensure that Private Fostering forms part of staff safeguarding induction and is used in safeguarding training in the school. The Headteacher will report on issues relating to Private Fostering and any impact for the school to the Governing Body.

The Governing Body will oversee the policy, ensure its implementation and review its content