



COOMBE WOOD SCHOOL

Child Protection Policy for the academic year 2018/2019

Policy Area

Key Document

Author

Headteacher

Version

1.0

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Next Review

Policy to be reviewed annually – May 2019

Introduction

The document has been created using the below sources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/737289/Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/737289/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_Sept_2018.pdf)

<http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working Together to Safeguard Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE July 2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE_July_2015.pdf)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused-2>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/section/26/enacted>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469448/FGM-Mandatory-Reporting-procedural-info-FINAL.pdf

"SCHOOLS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE"- OFSTED

At Coombe Wood School the safety and welfare of our students is of the utmost importance. Because of the day-to-day contact with students, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. All adults working in the school must protect our students from harm and abuse and be aware that any student may be at risk of harm or abuse. We have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students under the Education Act 2002 and Children Act 1989 through identifying any child welfare concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with families and other agencies where appropriate.

In addition to the Child Protection Policy, we have policies/procedures in respect of health and safety and anti-bullying. We also ensure that issues of child protection are raised with students through our PSHE curriculum and whole school and year group assemblies. The policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School. We also have other provisions in place to enable students to feel safe such as an open door policy and a school counsellor.

Purpose of this Policy and Procedure

The aims of this document are:

- raising awareness of child protection issues amongst all staff and volunteers and of what to do if they have concerns;
- ensuring safe recruitment practice in checking the suitability of all our staff and volunteers to work with children;
- developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- developing effective links with relevant agencies and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and core group meetings;
- establishing and maintaining a safe environment in which students feel secure and are encouraged to talk freely about anything that concerns them;
- ensuring students know there are adults and other students in the School who they can approach if they are worried about anything;
- including opportunities in the PSHE curriculum to develop and equip students with the skills needed to recognise risks and stay safe from abuse;
- supporting students who have been abused or may be at risk of harm in accordance with any agreed child protection plan;
- ensuring we respond appropriately to any concern or allegation about a member of staff or volunteer; and
- ensuring staff follow accepted “safe practice” principles when working with students.

If lower level concerns or needs (i.e. not child protection) are identified then the suitable internal or external support is put into place.

Definitions

Definition of safeguarding: OFSTED “Briefing for Section 5 inspectors on safe guarding children”.

- protecting children and young people from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children and young people’s health or development;
- ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- undertaking that role so as to enable those children and young people to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Definition of child protection: the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition)

“The process of protecting Individual children identified as either suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect”

Recognition

The first indication of concern about a student's welfare is not necessarily the presence of a serious injury. Concerns may be because of:

- bruises or marks on a student's body;
- remarks made by the student to another student a parent or another adult;
- observations of the student's behaviour;
- unexplained changes in the student's behaviour or personality;
- evidence of disturbance or explicit detail about abuse or possible abuse in a student's play, drawing or writing;
- evidence of neglect, failure to thrive or exposure to unnecessary risks;
- unauthorised absence from school and / or
- information about the parent(s) / carer(s) of the child or their home background.

Designated Staff for Child Protection

At Coombe Wood we have two Designated Safeguarding Leads – Mrs Lattimore and Mr Holding. Any member of staff concerned about a student should tell the Designated Safeguarding Leads immediately a concern is raised. If they are unavailable the member of staff/adult you must talk to is whoever is deputising or the Headteacher – Mr Laker. We also have a nominated Lead Advisor (Governor) for child protection who is **TBC**. The Designated Safeguarding Leads have a responsibility to:

- liaise with the nominated governor, the local authority Education and Children and Family Services, Police and other agencies on individual child protection cases;
- act as the contact person within the school, providing advice and support and ensuring that all staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers and members of the governing body) are aware of their role;
- be responsible for co-ordinating action within the school on child protection issues;
- discuss individual cases with staff on a "need to know basis" to protect children's right to confidentiality;
- oversee the planning of any curricular or other provision in relation to child protection matters;
- with any other relevant staff (e.g. class teacher, tutor, Year Leader), represent the school at child protection meetings and be a member of a "Core Group" if required;
- ensure staff are familiar with this Policy and Procedure, the London Child Protection Procedures, and DfE (*previously DCSF and DfES*) guidance;
- raise awareness about child protection on an ongoing basis;
- Arrange child protection induction and update training for **all** (i.e. including non-teaching) staff as appropriate;
- ensure that they (the designated Safeguarding Leads) receive update training at least every 2 years;
- Any new staff to the School or temporary staff, will be met by the Designated Safeguarding Leads to go through safeguarding issues and access to "what to do if a child is being abused" is also given to this member of staff.
- "Safeguarding however is everyone's responsibility" that works in this school: the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition)

For students: What to do if you are being abused

Abuse is wrong and should not be tolerated, no matter if you feel it is your fault. As a School we endeavour to make you feel protected and safe and hence will support all students who disclose abuse. The Designated Safeguarding Leads, have an open door policy, to ensure students can come and communicate with them. However, you may wish to speak to a member of staff you trust or who you feel you have a good professional relationship with. Any disclosures of abuse will be passed onto the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

What To Do If You Know Someone Who is Being Abused

The School's culture and ethos is to respect each individual and to ensure that all members of the school community are safe. You must report this at once to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. If you feel you are able to speak to another member of staff such as your form tutor/ Year Leader / subject teacher then please do so. You are not in trouble for raising any concerns.

Allegation or Concern About / From a Student or Member of Staff

Regarding staff- See the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition)

If a student raises a Child Protection concern please follow the guidance below:

- allow the student to speak and do not interrupt or ask leading questions;
- do not promise confidentiality;
- remain calm at all times;
- reassure the student that they are doing the correct thing telling someone;
- ensure that the student is safe to leave school. If they are not please find one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads straight away to take over, even if this means interrupting a meeting etc. If they are unavailable please contact a member of Leadership Group. If LG are off site, then please ring the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH);
- if a student opens up, but stops and does not disclose anything or stops after you mention that the information cannot be confidential, please also pass this on;
- a written statement of your account needs to be documented, with words the student used, written using their language. This statement must be signed and dated. This must be passed to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads immediately a concern is raised.

If staff have a concern about a colleague they must speak to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads as they have a professional duty to protect all students from harm. If a member of staff believes that a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately by their organisation, they should report the matter to the local authority designated officer (LADO) to give support and direction on how to proceed, as well as informing OFSTED.

Contact with the Family

Contact with the family should be thoroughly discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Leads, who may consult MASH. In cases where a minor physical injury causes concern, it is usual school practice to discuss this with the parent/carer. If the explanation suggests a non-accidental cause for the injury (or a failure to protect the *student* from harm), the *student* (as appropriate), parent/ carer should be informed that the matter must be referred to the MASH. In cases of possible neglect or emotional abuse, the concern may have built up over a period of time. There may have been discussion previously between school staff and the family about sources of help but if concerns persist, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will need to refer to the MASH and will normally advise the family of this.

In cases where there are suspicions of sexual abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will seek immediate advice from the Children and Family Social Work Service before discussing this with the family.

Recording

All records relating to child welfare concerns will be kept securely on CPoms. Information from records will only be accessed by staff on a "need to know" basis. Records relating to the student's welfare will remain on the student's file as long as the student is a student at the school. When the student leaves the school, the new (school/college) will be advised through a phone call to their Designated Safeguarding Lead that our records contain information about child protection concerns even where these are no longer current. Records should be sent to the new school or FE College in a way that is lawful in terms of the requirements of the Data Protection Act- if possible by meeting the new Designated Safeguarding Lead and handing them the records.

Allegations Against Staff in Their Personal Lives

See the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition)

If an allegation or concern arises about a member of staff, outside of their work with children, and which may present a risk of harm to students for whom the member of staff is responsible, the general principles outlined in these procedures will still apply.

Allegations Against the Headteacher

See the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition)

If an allegation is made regarding the Headteacher, it should be passed onto to the nominated governor for Child Protection who is **TBC**. An allegation will be reported to the local authority designated officer (LADO) to give support and direction on how to proceed, as well as informing OFSTED. The accused member of staff will:

- be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;
- be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process;
- if suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace.

Allegations Against the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)

See the London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition)

If the allegation is regarding a DSL, the HT will deal with the allegation. An allegation will be reported to the local authority designated officer (LADO) to give support and direction on how to proceed, as well as informing OFSTED. The accused member of staff will:

- be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;
- be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process;
- if suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace.

Confidentiality of Records – Member of Staff

The School will keep a clear and comprehensive summary of the case record on a member of staff's confidential personnel file (kept by the Headteacher) and a copy will also be given to the individual. The record should include details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, the decisions reached and the action taken. It should be kept at least until the person reaches normal retirement age or for ten years if longer. If a member of staff leaves the school then their next line of employment may be told of any cases.

Working with Children

We recognise that young people who are abused, neglected, or who witness abuse or neglect may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and a sense of blame. The School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

The School will endeavour to support the student through:

- the content of the curriculum;
- the School ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued;
- the School Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school; we will ensure that students know that some behaviour is unacceptable and that they are valued and not blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies that support students such as Social Services, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, the Borough School Attendance Service and the CWS Counsellor;
- ensuring that, where a student with a child protection plan leaves the School, their information is transferred to any new school or college, and that the social worker is informed.

Recruitment, Selection, Training and Supervision of Staff and Volunteers

In our recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers we will at all times adhere to the Government guidance contained within London Child Protection Procedures (5th Edition). In particular we will ensure that a member of every interview panel has the appropriate Safer Recruitment training, that we always follow up gaps in previous employment, that we always require specific references from employers for the last five years and that for all posts, paid and voluntary, the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service is carried out. We keep a central record of all staff with the date and outcome of their DBS check so at all times staff and students and parents can be assured this has been done.

Contractors and Outside Services

We expect all contractors providing services within the school whose staff have access to school premises to comply with this policy. In particular we require any contractor or organisation delivering a service on behalf of the School or using our premises to provide evidence they adhere to the above requirements in terms of recruitment, selection, training and supervision of their staff and any volunteers, in particular DBS disclosure checks. This policy and procedure will also apply to any organisation using School facilities. A visitor to the School who will be in direct contact with students will also be required to follow all standard safeguarding compliances as part of our computerised signing in process.

Requests for Assistance by Other Agencies

General information on supporting other agencies is:

- school staff have a legal duty to assist local authority Children's Social Services or the Police when they are making enquiries about the welfare of a student;
- information about a student must therefore be shared on a "need to know" basis with other agencies;
- when telephone requests for information are received, *always* maintain security by checking the telephone number listing for the caller and calling back to a switchboard number *before* giving information or confirming the student is on the school roll;
- always advise the designated teacher about such requests for information;
- requests for attendance at meetings about individual students (e.g. child protection conferences) should be notified to the designated teacher, who will arrange preparation of a report and attendance at the meeting;
- reports should contain information about the student's:
 - academic progress
 - attendance
 - behaviour
 - relationships with children and adults
 - family
 - any other relevant matter;
- reports should be objective, distinguishing between fact, observation, allegation and opinion;
- unless you specify otherwise, reports will normally be made available to the student's family.

Students Subject to a Child Protection Plan

Information regards a student on Child Protection Plan is:

- the School will be told by the relevant local authority Children, Family Social Work Service or the students new school when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan whether by the London Borough of Croydon or another local authority;
- the name of the key social worker will be clearly recorded on the student's record;
- the School will participate fully in the work of Core Groups for these students to assist with the objectives of the Child Protection Plan for the student;
- when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan, the School will report all unexplained absences;
- when a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan, the School will report all behavioural changes or other concerns to the key social worker; and
- when a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves the School, all the child protection information will be transferred to any new school.

Radicalisation and extremism

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Coombe Wood School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Coombe Wood School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Coombe Wood School seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

As Coombe Wood School opens all staff will receive Prevent Duty training. When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Headteacher and / or to the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. From 31 October 2015 a mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police.

The duty applies to all persons in Coombe Wood School, whether or not they have qualified teacher status.

If a member of staff is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should inform the DSL immediately.

The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. The DSL should be informed and a report to the police should be made by the close of the next working day.

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

Child sexual exploitation

Coombe Wood School is fully aware of the growing dangers of CSE to young people. The DSL's regularly review the actions the school takes to protect its students.

The HT and DSLs have received full CSE training.

Students are educated about how to keep themselves safe from CSE via timetabled assemblies and PSHE sessions.

Staff are made aware every September of the location on the school network of 'Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation' which is a key DFE document.

Parents / guardians are offered annual safety training which looks in detail at how they can keep their children safe from CSE.

In addition to this, Coombe Wood School buys in the services of internet filtering software that picks up any inappropriate search words entered into the school computer network by students. DSL's receive regular reports from the IT network manager of any inappropriate searches. DSL's then speak to students involved, inform parents and take any further relevant action that is recorded on the school e-safety incident log on SIMS.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist staff, parents and Governors of Coombe Wood School in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile

- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.