



## **Welfare/Health & Safety**

### **Safeguarding Children Policy**

It is the aim of the policy for all teaching and non teaching staff to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and to follow the procedures.

#### **Terms of Reference: - Legislation – section 47(1) The Children's Act 1989.**

"The local authority has a duty to investigate situations where it has 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in their area is suffering; or likely to suffer significant harm'. Enquiries must be made to decide whether it should take any action to safeguard the child's welfare."

Athelstan House School follows and takes account of the procedures outlined in the '*Working together to safeguard Children*' document located in the Child Protection file in the school office.

The designated Child Protection Officer at Athelstan House School is Jill Collins.\*

#### **Categories of concern:-**

Neglect: The persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in significant impairment of the child's health or development. e.g.

- Failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including abandonment or exclusion from home)
- Failure to protect from physical or emotional harm.
- Failure to meet child's basic emotional needs.
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision.
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care.

#### **Physical Abuse: Deliberate or intended injury to a child. e.g.**

- Hitting shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or poisoning.
- Deliberate inducement of an illness.

#### **Sexual Abuse: Actual or likely sexual exploitation. e.g.**

- Use of force or enticement to take part in sexual activity penetrative, or non – penetrative.
- Involvement in non contact activities such as looking at or making abusive images.
- Encouraging children to watch sexual activities.
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- Any sexual activity with a child under the age of 16. (with or without agreement)

**Emotional Abuse:** Persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection which adversely affects the child's emotional and behavioural development. e.g.

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate.
- Overprotection, limiting exploration and learning, preventing normal social interaction or imposing inappropriate expectations.
- Causing a child to feel frightened or in danger by the witnessing of violence towards another person whether domestic or not.

### **Recognition of possible abuse:**

It is extremely difficult to determine if abuse has occurred. Teachers should look carefully at the behaviour of their children and be alert for significant changes. Teachers should be aware that children may exhibit any of the following without abuse having occurred:

- Disclosure.
- Non accidental injury, bruising or marks.
- Explanation inconsistent with injury.
- Several different explanations for an injury.
- Reluctance to give information about an injury
- A sudden change in behaviour – aggression, extroversion, depression, withdrawn.
- Attention seeking
- Hyperactivity
- Poor attention
- Appear frightened of parents or family members
- Abnormal attachment between parent and child
- Indiscriminate attachment
- Hyper alertness.
- Reduced response.
- Frozen watchfulness.
- Nightmares.
- Anxiety/irritability.
- Abdominal pain/headaches.
- Poor self esteem.
- Poor peer relationships
- Act in an inappropriate way for age
- Over sexualised play/talk or drawings.
- Excessive or inappropriate masturbation
- Self harm/eating disorder
- Frequent visits to the toilet (urinary infection).
- Reluctance to change for P.E.
- Failure to thrive
- Poor hygiene
- Recurrent/untreated infections of skin or head lice

- Untreated health/dental issues
- Frequent absence from school or repeated lateness
- Delay in meeting normal developmental milestones

## **Procedures and responsibilities – any staff member**

The procedure route will depend upon the urgency of the situation and whether it is merely a suspicion of abuse or an actual disclosure.

### **Suspicion of Abuse (if abuse is suspected but there has been no disclosure.)**

1. Ask casual open questions about the nature of the concern e.g. bruises, marks, change in behaviour etc. "Can you tell me about..."
2. Believe the child and reassure them that they were right to talk to you.
3. Record the facts and conversation in writing immediately afterwards using the exact words spoken not implied. Sign and date the report (it may be required as evidence.)
4. Report the suspicion to the Designated Person responsible for Child Protection or the Headteacher. The Designated Person or Headteacher will take the appropriate action.

### **Disclosure**

1. Allow the child to talk – ask only open questions e.g. "Can you tell me more about...." Do not press for detail, put forward your own ideas or use words that the child has not used themselves.
2. Stay calm and reassuring.
3. Do not make promises that cannot be kept e.g. confidentiality – tell the child that you will have to tell someone else who will be able to help.
4. Believe the child but do not apportion any blame to the perpetrator. (it may be someone they love)
5. Reassure the child that they were not to blame and they were right to talk to you.
6. Ask the child if they have told anyone else.
7. Keep an open mind.
8. Record the conversation and facts verbatim in writing immediately afterwards (writing notes during the interview may put undue pressure on the child). Sign and date the report (it may be required as evidence).
9. Establish details of full name, D.O.B. address and names of parents/guardians.
10. Report to the Designated Person or Headteacher who will contact the Social Services Department as necessary.

## Emergency procedures

If the designated Person (Jill Collins) or Headteacher are not available, establish the facts and details as above and contact the initial response team for London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames on 020 8891 7969.

- Ask for the Duty Social Worker
- Check to see if the family are already known to Social Services
- Discuss the situation and ask for advice
- A social worker may come to school to talk to the child.
- Establish who will be responsible for informing the parents.
- Social services will contact the police (Child Protection Unit) as necessary.
- If action is taken, follow up the phone call with a referral form.

## Training

Staff	Course	Training date	Renewal date
Jill-Collins (CPO)	Child Protection Level 2	June 07	June 09
	Safeguarding Children Workshop	June 09	
	Safer Recruitment Workshop	18.09.09	
Pedro Alves	Safeguarding children and young people – Foundation in child protection	14.01.08	
Jill Burrows	Safeguarding children and young people – Foundation in child protection	14.01.08	
Pat Rehm	Safeguarding children and young people – Foundation in child protection	26.11.08	
Brighide Kerrigan	Safeguarding children and young people – Foundation in child protection (as part of NVQ Level 3)	08/09	
Sally Burden	Safeguarding children and young people – Foundation in child protection (as part of PGCE)	08/09	
Whole school	Safeguarding children training by Jill Collins	Aut 2009	Spr 2010

*Athelstan House School has a legal duty to be non-discriminatory towards disabled pupils in all aspects of school life.*

*'Each child is special'*