

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY **and** **EVERY CHILD MATTERS**

Opening Statement

Forest Prep School is dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils; our policies and practices encompass the needs of all our children from Early Years to Year 6 across all aspects of school life including out of school provision. It is the duty of all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to play an active role in ensuring that each child's needs are met.

All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow the Safeguarding procedures. In particular they need to be aware of their duty to report concerns, the guidance for identifying child abuse, what to do if a child makes an allegation of child abuse and issues about confidentiality.

It is the aim of the policy to support, the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters. It promotes strategies of:

Being Healthy

Ensuring that children are able to remain mentally and emotionally healthy.

Supporting parents in keeping their children healthy.

Staying Safe

Ensuring that children are safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation

Keeping children safe from accidental injury and death.

Working with agencies to safeguard children in accordance with current government guidance

Enjoy and Achieve

Ensuring children are ready for school, attend school regularly, arrive on time and are collected at the appropriate time.

Encouraging parents to support their children's learning.

Making a Positive Contribution

Parents support their children's social and emotional development.

Children are supported in managing changes and responding to challenges in their lives.

Ensuring that children choose to engage in law abiding and positive behaviour.

Achieve Economic Well Being

Families are supported in maximizing their economic well-being.

Parents support their children 11 – 19 in preparation for working life

STAFF RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

A staff recruitment policy is in place to ensure that the school appoints the very best people to posts in the school and that safe recruitment practices are rigorously enforced in order to:

- To ensure all those employed at Forest Prep School are suitable individuals to work with children and young people.
- To ensure all those employed at Forest Prep School are the best qualified and experienced to work with children and young people.
- To ensure all those employed at Forest Prep School share the school's ethos, values, ways of working and aspirations for its pupils and the community it serves.
- To meet the requirements of the safeguarding agenda and protect both pupils and employers within the establishment.
- To meet government recommendations for appropriate training especially for safe staff recruitment.
- To ensure all employees understand the requirements within safeguarding and their role.

Induction of volunteers

Volunteers must also have Criminal Records Bureau clearance. For a brief activity, such as a school visit, which does not involve the supervision or close contact of children the school may telephone for a "99" check. For extended contact with children, when children may be left alone with an adult, or when an adult visitor may be in and around the school building, a full CRB search will be conducted. The office performs this. Visitors who do not yet have clearance will under no circumstance be left alone with a child or group of children.

Welcoming visitors

It is assumed that visitors with a professional role i.e. the School Nurse or members of the police already have relevant clearance but the office will endeavour to check this before admittance is granted and a note made of anyone entering without clearance.

Photographing and videoing

At Forest Prep, we record the efforts and achievements of our pupils through the use of video and photography. These are often used within the school as part of the learning process and celebrate the successes of children.

We highlight pupil's participation and achievements in school events and use photographs of pupils along with examples of their work. Photographs will only be taken on the school cameras and downloaded onto school systems. These may be used in school displays, publications or website. Where images of pupils are used we only identify a pupil by their first name or class unless further permission has been granted. From time to time, we invite the local press to cover events and these stories may be featured in the local newspaper. (Refer to Early Years Foundation Stage Policy for more details)

There has been a lot of controversy surrounding adult photographing and filming children. The concerns are genuine, however we have decided to take a sensible, balanced approach which allows parents to photograph and film providing they follow certain guidelines:

- Parents consent to school taking video and photographs by giving written permission..
- School photographs that are for use outside of school are anonymous unless specific permission has been received from the parents.

Whistle blowing

If members of staff ever have any concerns about the behaviour or intentions of any person within the building, school grounds or within proximity of children, they have a professional duty to inform the management accordingly. This can be done in writing or verbally but staff should be prepared to discuss issues in the confidence that any such matter will be dealt with sensitively and with the necessary degree of confidentiality.

CHILD PROTECTION

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.”

Forest Prep School follows and takes account of the Trafford child protection procedures outlined in the Trafford Local Safeguarding Children Boards “Child Protection Handbook”.

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

This School recognises its legal duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse as outlined in the 'Safeguarding of Children' document.

- All employees and adults who work in direct contact with children, will need to be cleared by Criminal Records Bureau.
- The school will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

- Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside – for example, for time out after behaviour which needs improvement – will leave the door ajar.
- Adults who have not been registered as ‘fit’ persons will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet.
- Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- The layout of the classroom(s) will permit constant supervision of all children.
- The Staff seek to adopt an open attitude towards pupils as part of their responsibility for pastoral care so that pupils and parents feel free to talk about any concerns and see the School as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.
- Pupils’ worries and fears will be taken seriously should they seek help from a member of Staff. (See “Staff Procedure and Responsibilities.”)
- Staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if concerns are such that a referral must be made to the appropriate agencies (CDAT) in order to protect the child.
- Staff who observe, or are told of, injuries that appear to be non-accidental or have concerns that indicate physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect MUST report their concerns to the Headmaster. This will be discussed with the designated officer who will in turn inform CDAT.
- Staff do not carry out investigations themselves. This is a matter for the CDAT.
- If Staff are unsure how to proceed, ask the designated officer or the Headmaster for advice.
- The School will ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with quickly so that any harm to a pupil is minimised.
- All pupils are encouraged to show respect for others and to take responsibility for protecting themselves. The pupils are encouraged to report bullying (and suspected abuse) of classmates. The House Captain system at Year 6 and the School Council are great sources of information.
- Parents are expected to help children to behave in non-violent and non-abusive ways to both Staff and other pupils. The ethos of the School is care and consideration for others.
- Parents can feel confident that procedures are in place to ensure that all Staff appointed are suitable to work with children.
- If it is necessary to use physical force to protect a child from injury, to prevent a pupil from harming others or if any pupil is injured accidentally, the parents will be informed immediately. Pupils will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment.

THE SAFEGUARDING OFFICER IS Rick Hyde (Headmaster)

STAFF 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. The first concern will be the child. Children whose condition or behaviour has given cause for concern will be listened to, reassured and helped to understand that they themselves are valued and respected and have not been at fault.

- Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated.
- Parents will normally be the first point of reference, but if they are not in a position to allay any legitimate anxieties, the matter will also be taken up with the CDAT.
- In exceptional circumstances, CDAT may be the first point of reference.
- All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff, Headmaster and the dedicated officer for safeguarding children.
- If you hear third hand about a situation in your capacity as a class teacher, a friend, neighbour etc:
- Write down any details that you know, when you heard the information and from whom etc. and pass your notes to the Headmaster and retain a copy yourself.
- Information will be gathered discreetly from other sources. Try to avoid discussing the situation with others.
- If in doubt, give the information to the Headmaster who will then store it for later use if it proves to be necessary.

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

- Ask casual open questions about the nature of the concern e.g. bruises, marks, change in behaviour etc. "Can you tell me about..."
- Believe the child and reassure them that they were right to talk to you.
- 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.)
- Report the suspicion to the Designated Person responsible for Child Protection. The Designated Person will take the appropriate action.

Disclosure

- 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.
- Stay calm and reassuring.
- 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.
- Believe the child but do not apportion any blame to the perpetrator. (it may be someone they love)
- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and they were right to talk to you.
- Ask the child if they have told anyone else.

- Keep an open mind.
- 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).
- Establish details of full name, D.O.B. address and names of parents/guardians.
- Report to the Designated Person or Headmaster who will contact the Social Services Department as necessary.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If the Designated Person is not available, establish the facts and details as above and contact the Social Services.

- Phone Trafford Borough Council - Ask for Social Services – Children and Families.
- 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.

If a volunteer or member of staff is accused of any form of child abuse, she/he will be interviewed immediately by the person in charge of the group. The person accused may choose to attend the interview accompanied by a friend or colleague and to seek advice from a union representative. The interview will usually be with the Headmaster. Depending on the situation the school reserves the right to suspend the member of staff concerned pending investigation. The member of staff will have no contact with the child/children pending investigation and outcome.

Keep Records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people other than the Headmaster, Designated Officer and other members of staff as appropriate.

Support Families

With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the school will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

How to Contact Help through Trafford

Phone: 0161 912 5125
Email: cdat@trafford.gov.uk
Child Protection Line: 0161 912 5124
Fax: 0161 912 5056
Trafford Police helpline 0161 856 7527