



The Edith Borthwick School

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Lead Governor	Heather Hill
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Next review date	Autumn 2024

The Edith Borthwick School

Safeguarding Policy

To be read in conjunction with:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE –Sep 22)

<https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2739/set-procedures-may2022.pdf> (October 2019)

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (Essex Safeguarding Children Board ESCB)

Purpose

The purpose of The Edith Borthwick School safeguarding children policy is to ensure that procedures are in place so that every child who is a registered pupil at our school is safe and protected.

This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers and regular visitors about how concerns are managed.

Introduction

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make in protecting children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at our school. The key elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 state that a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Therefore, when this policy uses the word 'child' or 'children' it is referring to 'children and young people'.

This policy also applies to our oldest pupils who are over 18 years old and remain 'vulnerable adults'.

This policy applies to all staff, parents, governors, volunteers, visitors and pupils.

Our ethos

Our school promotes an ethos where our pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. We recognise that our pupils are particularly vulnerable because they have special educational needs and some are completely dependent on adult support for all aspects of care which includes intimate care.

Many of our young people have barriers to communication and use a range of strategies to aid autonomous communication. We must all allow young people the time, space and scaffolding to enable them to express their thoughts, feelings views and needs, using appropriate communication systems, including Alternative and Augmentative communication (AAC) systems, such as PECS books and Makaton.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world in a positive way. For such children school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components in their life. Other children may be vulnerable because they have a disability or they are in care. We seek to provide all our children with the necessary support to keep them safe and build their self-esteem and self-confidence.

We want children at our school to feel able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor if they are worried or concerned about something.

All staff and volunteers will, through induction and training, know how to recognise concerns about a child and know how to manage a disclosure made by a child. We will not make promises to a child we cannot keep and we will not keep secrets. Every child will be told, by the adult they have chosen to talk to what will happen next.

The Edith Borthwick School will endeavour to provide activities and opportunities in the curriculum that will equip our children with the skills they need to stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage children to develop essential life skills.

At all times we will work to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies such as Health or Social Care.

Induction

When staff join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of this policy and informed who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is (Maggie Loveday) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) who are Lucy Crisp, Dan Horscroft and Lisa Solvey act in her absence. The induction programme includes basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child. All staff members also sign a Code of Conduct, confirming that they are clear and that it is their responsibility to know and understand the key school policies, including Safeguarding and E-Safety.

All regular (3 sessions or more) visitors and volunteers to our school meet with the DSL before working with the children and are asked to sign a Code of Conduct that states the know and understand our safeguarding policies and have read part one of Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) 2022.

All staff, visitors and volunteers must ensure they know who the DSL and DDSLs are. Posters in reception and around the school also make it clear which staff have these roles.

When new pupils join our school, all parents and carers are informed that we have a safeguarding policy. This is given to parents should they request a copy and is available on the school's website. Parents and carers are informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in social care with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to another agency.

Safeguarding children training

Keeping Children Safe in Education says 'all staff members should receive appropriate child protection training which is 'regularly updated'. This training should include whistleblowing procedures and how to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime. All staff in school who are in regular contact with children will need to attend basic safeguarding children training every year. This is referred to as 'Level 1' safeguarding children training and is provided, in this school, by the Designate Safeguarding Lead – Maggie Loveday. Those staff who have particular responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children will attend more comprehensive training and further training provided by Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). Governors join the school Level 1 training, have access to governor specific safeguarding training run by the local authority and have annual safeguarding training. A record of all training is kept and reviewed termly in senior leadership team meetings.

For students that are over the age of 18 years the school will follow the [Southend Essex and Thurrock \(SET\) Procedure for adults](#) (October 2019)

Recording and reporting concerns about the safety and welfare of a child

All staff, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to take prompt action if they are concerned about the safety and welfare of a child.

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer 'significant harm' action must be taken immediately.

All concerns about the safety and welfare of a child must be taken seriously.

All staff, volunteers and visitors should:

- Speak to the DSL or nominated DDSL in the absence of the DSL.
- Record the concern, using the school's safeguarding children recording system, forms can be found in reception;

- Agree with this person what action should be taken, by whom and when it will be reviewed.

Non-urgent or low level concerns

All concerns about a child should initiate some form of action.

Concerns that are of a non-urgent or low-level nature should still be recorded centrally using the school's safeguarding children recording system.

A concern, that, in itself, does not reach the threshold of significant harm, however, a pattern of concerns may suggest emotional abuse or neglect. Recording and action upon low level or non-urgent concerns about a child is important in order to recognise the cumulative effect of some types of abuse.

Informing parents and carers

We ensure that parents and carers have an understanding of our responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of pupils by making our obligations clear in the school prospectus.

In most cases parents and carers should be informed when concerns have been raised about their child. It is important that parents and carers are given an opportunity to address concerns raised.

Parents and carers should generally be informed if a referral is to be made to the Children and Families Service with Children and Learning or any other agency.

Parents must not be informed if it is believed that by doing so would put the child at risk, for example if the child has made a disclosure of sexual or physical abuse.

In this event immediate advice should be sought from the Family Operations Hub.

Role of all adults

All school staff and volunteers must:

- Read Part 1 AND Appendix A 'Further information' of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, Sep 22)
- Sign our Code of Conduct agreeing that they have read and understood our safeguarding policies
- Raise any questions about the safeguarding policies or KCSIE 2022 with the DSL
- Report any concerns immediately to the DSL or DDSL.
- Identify children who would benefit from 'early help' and discuss with the DSL
- Provide safe opportunities, and where relevant, communication support systems, for pupils to express feelings and opinions

Role of the head teacher

The headteacher of the school will ensure that:

- Mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2022)
- The policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented, and followed by all staff
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and DDSLs to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children
All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner.

Role of the governing body

The governing body of the school will ensure that:

- Mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2022)
- One member of the governing body is responsible for championing safeguarding children issues. This person liaises with the school's DSL and provides information to the governing body
- A senior member of the school's leadership team as appointed DSL. This person must have undertaken appropriate training and attended refresher training every 2 years and attend all update training as required
- Leaders follow the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) procedures and the school's safeguarding children policy is reviewed annually and updated to reflect any changes in the Secretary of State's guidance
- Leaders operate safe recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers
- Utilise the experiences of their staff when shaping safeguarding policies. Opportunity should therefore be provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy
- Appropriate filters and monitoring of IT systems are in place. Schools typically have filtering systems in place, BUT not all schools take pro-active steps to monitor internet use, particularly for vulnerable pupils.
- Over blocking does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding
- Children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers and these are in line with Local authority procedures.
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses that are brought to the attention of the governing body are rectified in a timely manner.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has a specific responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people registered at the school. There should only be one and this responsibility cannot be delegated. However, some of the tasks may be delegated to the DDSL.

The role of the DSL includes:

- Acting as the first point of contact with the local authority with regard to safeguarding children matters;
- Provision of information to the local authority on how the school discharges its duties with regard to safeguarding children;
- Liaison with the governing body and local authority with regard to any deficiencies of practice or procedure and how these may be rectified.

Referrals to the Children and Families Department and other agencies:

- Ensuring all actions are in line with SET procedures.
- Supporting and enabling staff to make effective referrals to the Children and Families Service and other agencies where there are concerns that a child is being abused;
- Holding a copy of all referrals made to the Children and Families Service and referrals to other agencies related to safeguarding children matters;
- Liaison with the headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) to inform him/her of any issues and on-going investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

Training:

- Ensuring that staff have received information on safeguarding children at induction;
- Making sure that staff receive Essex approved safeguarding training annually and receive updates via email and briefings as required appropriate to their role;
- Ensuring that all staff who have specific responsibility for safeguarding children attend more in depth training;
- Ensuring that all staff understand internal reporting and recording systems and are clear about what to do if they are worried about a child.

Raising Awareness:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware of the school's safeguarding children policy and that it is readily available and reviewed annually;
- Keeping up to date with changes in local policy and procedure and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

Recording Concerns:

- Managing the school's safeguarding children recording system;

- When children leave the school, ensuring their child protection or safeguarding file relating to them is copied for new establishment as soon as possible, but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Child protection conference and core groups

Members of staff may be asked to attend a child protection conference and/or relevant core group meetings, on behalf of the school, in respect of individual children. The person attending from school will often be the DSL or DDSL, however another member of staff may be asked to attend depending on their role or involvement with the child. The person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible. A child protection conference will be convened if it is considered the child(ren) are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. Review conference and regular core group meetings will be held to monitor the child protection plan.

All reports for a child protection conference will be prepared in advance of the meeting. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents at the conference and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development.

Child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents/carers and we recognise that school staff are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. We will work in an open and honest way with all parents and carers. Our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

Safe recruitment and selection of staff

The school's recruitment processes conform to the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2022). Please refer to the schools 'Safer Recruitment Toolkit, which is available from the school office.

Complaints or concerns expressed by pupils, staff or volunteers

The Edith Borthwick School recognises that listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end any expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child will be listened to and acted upon in order to safeguard his/her welfare.

We will also seek to ensure that the child or adult who makes a complaint is informed not only about the action the school will take but also the length of time that will be required to resolve the complaint. The school will also endeavour to keep the child or adult regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint.

Please also refer to our Grievance Policy.

Managing allegations and concerns against staff and volunteers

Any allegation made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is subject to the allegation. The Edith Borthwick School follows the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Allegations should be reported to the DSL, who will then contact the Essex LADO. The LADO can also be contacted immediately.

An allegation refers to a person who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence;
- Behaved in a way that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children.

Please also refer to our Whistleblowing Policy and Dealing with Safeguarding allegations made against adults.

'Prevent' strategy

Vulnerability to radicalisation or extreme view points

The school recognises its duty to protect our pupils from indoctrination into any form of extreme ideology which may lead to the harm of self or others. This is particularly important because of the open access to electronic information through the internet. The school aims to safeguard young people through educating them on the appropriate use of social media and the dangers of downloading and sharing inappropriate material which is illegal under the Counter-Terrorism Act. The school vets all visitors carefully and will take firm action if any individual or group is perceived to be attempting to influence members of our school community, either physically or electronically. Our definition of radical or extreme ideology is 'a set of ideas which could justify vilification or violence against individuals, groups or self.' Staff are trained to be vigilant for spotting signs of extremist view and behaviours and to always report anything which may suggest a student is expressing opinions which may cause concern. Our core mission of diversity permeates all we do. We place a strong emphasis on the common values that all communities share such as self-respect, tolerance and the sanctity of life. We work hard to broaden our students' experience, to prepare them for life and work in contemporary Britain. We teach them to respect and value the diversity around them as well as understanding how to make safe, well-considered decisions.

All staff are required to complete the online PREVENT training:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk> and a central record of training is kept.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a growing cause of concern in schools.

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore it is dealt with as part of existing child and adult safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures. It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Despite the harm it causes, FGM practising communities consider it normal to protect their cultural identity. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. The average age is 10 to 12 years.

At The Edith Borthwick School, our staff are alerted to the following key indicators that:

- A child's family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM
- A child may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent
- A child may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion
- Any female child born to a woman or has a sister who has been subjected to FGM will be considered to be at risk, as much as other female children in the extended family.

Any information or concern that a child is at risk of FGM will result in a child protection referral to Children's Social Care.

The new mandatory reporting duty for FGM under the Serious Crime Act 2015, requires teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under 18 year olds to the police by calling 101. This is an individual's responsibility and not the setting's.

Guidelines on mandatory reporting can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jfgho4m>

Further guidance on FGM can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jxf6byf> and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

There is also an FGM helpline available 24/7 on 0800 028 3550, or email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Private Fostering Arrangements

The Children Act 1989 defines private fostering as occurring when a child under 16 or under 18 if disabled, is placed for twenty eight consecutive days or more in the care of an adult who is not a close relative. Where this is the case Children's Social Care should be notified.

Ensuring staff knowledge and understanding of KCSIE and our policy is sustained

It is not enough to simply deliver training in safeguarding, instead governors need not only to be sure of the impact of training and but that it is sustained.

As a school our process is:

1. The safeguarding policies are available to all via our website. There are also links to NSPCC phone lines for those who would rather report concerns outside of the school. This information is shared with parents via weekly updates and department newsletters. New parent induction also signposts this information;
2. New staff induction includes a headteacher (Designated Safeguarding Lead or DSL) briefing on our whistleblowing and safeguarding policies;
3. All new staff complete the NSPCC Safeguarding in Schools online training during their first two weeks. A central record is kept of staff when staff complete this and certificates are held centrally;
4. All staff, visitors (coming more than three times), and volunteers meet with the DSL before starting and sign our Code of Conduct to confirm that they have read and understood our safeguarding policy AND DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. A central record is then kept;
5. All visitors to the school are signposted to a leaflet detailing our basic safeguarding procedures
6. All staff have annual Safeguarding training delivered by Maggie Woodman (DSL).
7. All staff complete the NSPCC Safeguarding in Schools online training on a rolling programme. We have begun with teachers and HLTAs. A central record is kept of staff when staff complete this and certificates are held centrally. This is completed every three years;
8. There is a standing item in department meetings and briefings that focuses on safeguarding.
9. The safeguarding link governors monitor the implementation of the policy termly.

Other relevant policies & further information

The governing body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures. Their duty is now to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies, for instance:

- Whistle blowing
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Trips and visits
- Health and Safety
- Sex & Relationship Education

- Equal opportunities
- E-Safety
- Attendance
- Staff code of conduct
- Visitor & volunteer code of conduct
- Complaints

The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will consider safeguarding matters.

In addition to the above, staff need to have an awareness and an understanding of the following:

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Children missing education – and Annex A of KCSIE
- Child missing from home or care
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) – and Annex A of KCSIE
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Forced marriage- and Annex A
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental health
- Missing children and adults strategy
- Preventing radicalisation – and Annex A of KCSIE
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting
- Trafficking