

Tower House School



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (to include EYFS setting)

What is Child Protection?

A moral and legal responsibility for children and young people under the age of 18, under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Recognition that abuse may occur.

Recognition that non-action is not an option.

Understanding that all children are entitled to be protected from harm or abuse (UN Convention Rights of the Child Article 19).

A framework and procedure setting out the action that must be taken where there are any concerns relating to the protection of children from harm or abuse.

What is Child Abuse?

Four main types; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.

Also, organised abuse.

Abuse actually refers to action or inaction by parents or carers.

Assault refers to action or inaction by anyone else.

Generally the term 'abuse' is used to cover all areas.

It often comes to peoples' notice through:-

Disclosure by the child

Information by a third party

Observation or unexplained injury or changes in behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Tower House School recognises that, under the Children Act of 2004, it has a statutory duty and responsibility for making arrangements to ensure all its functions are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at the school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the appropriate agency, normally Richmond Social Services for Children and Families. (See below for contact address and number) The school acknowledges that through raising awareness and understanding of the main forms of abuse, and making sure that all staff know what to do if they suspect abuse, this will further safeguard the pupils and the adults working with them.

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at this school including within the EYFS.

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

SUPPORT TO PUPILS who may have been abused.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Our policy applies to all staff working in the school including academic staff, assistants, support staff and governors.

PREVENTION

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

Tower House School will therefore:

Establish and maintain an ethos where the boys feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;

Ensure boys know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip the boys with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and information about who to turn for help;

Include in the curriculum material which will help the boys develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.

PROCEDURES

The Role of the Child Protection Officer

Tower House School will:

Ensure it has a designated Child Protection Officer who has undertaken as a minimum, a child protection training course (Level 2) with inter agency working every two years. The designated Child Protection officer at Tower House School is Peter Black, a member of the Senior management team (Director of Studies), who is also the designated child protection officer for the EYFS setting.

Ensure that the Child Protection Officer will complete a two-day LB Richmond Training, to become the designated 'Lead Professional' in the workplace to coordinate on all matters concerning Child Protection.

Ensure that all staff, including the head, receive training in child protection which is updated at least every 3 years and all part time and voluntary staff that work with the children are made aware of the arrangements.

Recognise the importance of the role of the Child Protection Officer and ensure he has the time and training to undertake his duties;

Ensure there are contingency arrangements, should the Child Protection Officer not be available;

Ensure that the Child Protection Officer will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases.

Ensure that the Child Protection Officer will undertake further training regarding the Government's implementation of 'Contactpoint'; a national online database which will contain information about children on the 'At Risk' register. To also become the nominated person in the workplace to have an accredited username and password to access this information, for certain pupils which may require safeguarding procedures to be implemented.

The Role of Governors and School Staff

Tower House School will:

Ensure that the Governors undertake an annual review of the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

Ensure that every member of staff and every Governor knows the name of the Child Protection Officer and his role.

Inform every member of staff that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels.

Provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:-

- their personal responsibility,

- the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
- how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse

Ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner.

Ensure that the behaviour and actions of staff do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil (see "Code of Conduct and Acceptable Behaviour Code.)

Behavioral Clues That May Indicate Child Abuse

Although there are many other potential indicators, the abused child may:

- Be aggressive, oppositional, or defiant
- Cower or demonstrate fear of adults
- Act out, displaying aggressive or disruptive behavior
- Be destructive to self or others
- Come to school too early or not want to leave school—indicating a possible fear of going home;
- Show fearlessness or extreme risk taking
- Be described as "accident prone"
- Cheat, steal, or lie (may be related to too high expectations at home)
- Be a low achiever (to learn, children must convert aggressive energy into learning; children in conflict may not be able to do so)
- Be unable to form good peer relationships
- Wear clothing that covers the body and that may be inappropriate in warmer months (be aware that this may be a cultural issue as well)
- Show regressive or less mature behavior
- Dislike or shrink from physical contact—may not tolerate physical praise such as a pat on the back)

Physical Clues That May Indicate Child Abuse

Since children typically receive bruises during the course of play or while being active, the leading or bony edges of the body, such as knees, elbows, forearms, or brows, are most likely to be bruised. The soft tissue areas, such as cheeks, buttocks, and thighs, are not normally injured in such circumstances. Additionally, bruises received during the normal course of childhood activity are rarely in distinct shapes, such as a hand, belt buckle, or adult teeth marks. Bruises in soft tissue areas or in distinct shapes are much more indicative of physical abuse

Liaison with Other Agencies

Tower House School will:

Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences;

Notify the local Social Services team if:-

- it should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register (whether fixed term or permanently)

- there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend);
- or as agreed as part of any child protection or core group plan.

Record Keeping

Tower House School will:

Keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately;

Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;

Ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately (see below). If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager.

The Child Protection Officer will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies via the Child Protection Officer in order to safeguard children.

Any member of staff who has a concern as to whether or not a pupil at Tower House is failing to meet any one of the five core outcomes from the Every Child Matters agenda, immediately turns to the Child Protection Officer to complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Pre-Asst. checklist to determine whether or not to request a CAF form is filed with the Local Education Authority.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets and are cautioned against asking leading questions.

Communication with Parents

Tower House School will:-

Always aim to involve parents in any referrals before they are made. However if a suspicion of abuse is recorded, and the child is considered at risk an immediate referral will be made to the local authority team and we will take their advice on informing parents.

Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations via this policy on the school website.

Recording and Reporting suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff make a record of:

- The child's name; address, date of birth;

- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time;
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file by the Head. The member of staff will discuss the incident with the child protection officer and a decision will be made about who should be notified. If a child's safety is at risk the local authority team will be contacted immediately (at least within 24 hours). We will take advice from them regarding information then given to parents.

In a case where a child is not in immediate danger we try to discuss the matter with parents before making any referrals. However it is the welfare of the child which is paramount and this is at the forefront of all our actions. We are aware that many children have suffered because of lack of communication between agencies, and that government guidance now encourages the full sharing of information. We shall therefore use our professional judgment in sharing information with the agencies that 'need to know', being open and honest with parents and children as to why we feel we need to share the information.

Full records of conversations will be maintained when any referrals or discussions are held with any other agencies or with parents prior to a referral. These records will include dates and times of the conversation, who we speak to, and the advice we were given.

Supporting The Pupil At Risk

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful.

They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self- motivation.
- The school ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives pupils a sense of being valued
- The school's behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school.
- Ensuring all staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth.
- Ensuring that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;

- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;
- Vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Services **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**
- When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately.

Drug Use and Child Protection

The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

- When there is evidence or reasonable cause;
- To believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- To believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- Where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.

Children of Drug Using Parents

Further enquiries and or further action will be taken when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a boy's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- The parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection);
- A chaotic and unpredictable home environment exists which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- Boys are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- Boys are exposed to criminal behaviour.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- The school has a Safe Recruitment Policy which ensures operation of safe recruitment procedures and complies with Independent School Standards Regulations. We obtain assurance from any other organisation working within the school that appropriate child protection checks have been obtained and hold copies of their Safer recruitment policies where appropriate.
- Applicants for posts within the school are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out Enhanced CRB checks and take-up references, identity and qualification checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

- We abide by ISI requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the school or has access to the children
- We abide by the requirements of the Education (Provision of Information by Independent School) (England) Regulations 2003 in respect of any person who leaves our employment, in that we will report to the ISA ,within one month of leaving, details of any member of staff whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children . Compromise agreements do not apply in this connection and we recognise that failure to do so would constitute an offence.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the school.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the school so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of position of trust).

OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Restraint

Our policy on restraint by staff is set out in a separate document. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury themselves, another person or property

Staff facing an allegation of abuse.

Our policy on staff facing an allegation of abuse is set out in a separate document.

Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Health and Safety

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Children with Special Educational Needs

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with childrens' special educational needs or emotional and behavioural problems are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

The Use of the Internet

Our policy on Use of the Internet is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the Governing Body. We recognise that teachers are encouraging the use of the Internet to promote learning throughout the curriculum. The guidance focuses on the personal safety and well being of pupils in the school and sets out a number of points to clarify the potential hazards and steps that staff can take to minimise risks.

Policy for Education Visits and Residential Trips.

Our policy for Educational Visits and Residential Trips is set out in a separate document. We recognise that all Child Protection procedures should continue to be observed on all educational and residential trips. Risk Assessments are a vital part of the Health and Safety procedures undertaken prior to these trips.

GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- Designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues;
- Ensure an annual report is made to the governing body, on child protection matters to include changes affecting CP policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum;
- Ensure that this policy is annually reviewed and updated.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

When the school provides extended school facilities (before or after school) activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

PERSONNEL AND EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

Child Protection Officer:	Peter Black
(Level 2 trained deputies when the above is absent)	Gregory Evans Fiona Richards
Health and Safety Officer:	Jackie Griffiths.
SENCO:	Anna Patel
Designated Governor for child protection:	Barbara Humber
Safeguarding Children Advisor:	Sarah Brown

High Street
London
AB1 2CD
T: 020 654 321 Ext 987
E: sarah.brown@londoncpc.gov.uk

Contact for Social Services:-

Rapid Response Team
Services for Children and Families
42 York Street
Twickenham
TW1 3BW
Telephone 08456 122 660

Common Assessment (CAF) Co-ordinator

Daniela Acosta-Pagliari
LB Richmond-Upon-Thames
T: 020 8891 7973
E: caf@richmond.gov.uk

Common Assessment (CAF) Officer

Bilal Malik
LB Richmond-Upon-Thames
1st Floor Regal House
T: 020 8831 6145
E: bilal.malik@richmond.gov.uk

ContactPoint Project Manager

Tom Chapman
Children's Services and Culture
LB Richmond-Upon-Thames

T: 020 8891 799
E: t.chapman@richmond.gov.uk

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