Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Sensory Support Service

May 2014
INTRODUCTION

The Sensory Support Service fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 (Section 157 for Independent Schools and Academies) of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff who work for the service have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to Social Care via the Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre.

This policy sets out how the service discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children supported by the service. Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the service. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the service.

It is consistent with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.

Children with Special Educational Needs

A significant number of pupils we support have Statements of Special Educational Needs and multi–agency planning and involvement to support integrated care.

We recognise that, statistically, children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Members of the service who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

Some of the pupils that the service supports may have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or challenging behaviours. The service will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self–esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with schools/settings and parents/carers.

Some pupils we support may have communication difficulties and we are aware that they are vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Instead such children will often exhibit changes in behaviours or signs and indicators of abuse recognized by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

We promote high standards of practice, and with staff in schools and settings and parents and carers we ensure that disabled children know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.
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. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A)

**SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN** those who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.

**PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

1.0 **PREVENTION**

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

1.2 The service will therefore:

1.2.1 establish and maintain an ethos where children feel safe in both the real and the virtual world and are encouraged to talk and are listened to

1.2.2 ensure children know that there are adults in the service whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate

1.2.3 The service recognizes that the curriculum needs to include activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safer from abuse both in the real and the virtual world and information about who to turn to for help

1.2.4 The service will support staff to include accessible curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills

1.2.5 The service recognizes that some schools and settings use P.S! - Healthy and Safer Lifestyles Unit from the Cambridgeshire PSHE Service Personal Development Programme. This Unit reinforces essential skills for every child. Self esteem and confidence building, thinking independently and making assessments of risk based on their own judgements are encouraged throughout the Unit.

*(Note: Advice and resources on the teaching of personal safety skills at KS3 and KS4 is available from the PSHE Service or from the Education Child Protection Service.)*

2.0 **PROCEDURES**

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board “Core Inter-Agency Procedures”. A copy of these procedures can be found on the LSCB website www.cambslscb.org.uk
2.2 The Designated Senior Members of Staff for Child Protection are Angie Pike and Carys Raymond

2.3 The following members of staff have also received the Designated Person training Angie Pike and Carys Raymond

The service will:

2.3.1 Ensure there is a designated senior person on the VI and HI teams who have lead responsibility for child protection in the service and have undertaken, as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course run by The Education Child Protection Service. The DP will have a copy of the Designated Person Information Booklet which contains all relevant guidance and advice to support to carry out their role effectively

2.3.2 ensure that this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance

2.3.3 recognise the importance of the role of the designated person/s and ensure they have the time, training and support necessary to undertake their duties which include, providing advice and support to staff, taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children in need

2.3.4 ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, knows who the designated members of staff are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the point of induction

2.3.5 ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, knows what the contingency arrangements are for when the designated members of staff are not available.

2.3.6 ensure that the designated members of staff take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. The Designated Persons have access to both the Advice Line run by the Education Child Protection Service and Children’s Social Care. The Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) is also available (see Useful Contacts, Appendix B)

2.4.8 ensure every member of staff knows:

- the name of the designated person/s and their role
- how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect
- how to pass on and record concerns about a pupil
- that they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the Designated Person/s
- that they have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- where to find the Core Inter – Agency Procedures on the LSCB website

2.4.9 provide Child Protection training for all staff from the point of their induction which is updated regularly, every three years at a minimum, so that they are confident about:
• the service’s legislative responsibility
• their personal responsibility
• the service’s policies and procedures
• the need to be alert to the signs and indicators of possible abuse, including possible child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation
• the need to record concerns
• how to support and respond to a child who tells of abuse

2.4.10 ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, 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 in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies

2.4.11 ensure that parents are informed of the responsibility placed on the service in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the service website

2.4.12 ensure that this policy is available publicly either via the service website

  www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/visionsupport
  www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/hearingsupport

2.5 **Liaison with Other Agencies**

  The service will:

  2.5.1 work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all pupils

  2.5.2 co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups

  2.5.3 notify the relevant Social Care Unit immediately if:

    • there is an unexplained difficulty in accessing a child or young person who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
    • there is any change in circumstances to a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan

2.6 **Record Keeping**

  The service will:

  2.6.1 keep clear, detailed, accurate, 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 Care immediately

  2.6.2 ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked locations
2.6.3 ensure that schools and settings in which the service supports pupils are made aware of any records of concern made about children in their care and that they are given copies of these as appropriate.

2.7 Confidentiality and information sharing

2.7.1 Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 principles. The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

2.7.2 Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parents to see child protection requests, they will refer the request to the Designated Persons.

The service will:

2.7.3 ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or Social Care as required.*

* Information sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers is available from Department of Education. www.education.gov.uk

2.7.4 ensure that the service manager or Designated Persons will only disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, including Domestic Violence notifications

2.7.5 make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children

2.7.6 ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

2.8 Communication with Parents/Carers

The service will:

2.8.1 ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the service/staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties on the service website.

2.8.2 undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action. If the service believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from Social Care. (Further guidance on this can be found in the Core Inter-agency Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board)

3.0 SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN

3.1 We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on those children which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.
3.2 School or setting 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 become withdrawn.

3.3 We recognise that some vulnerable children may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

3.4 **The service will support the pupil through:**

3.4.1 Opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation

3.4.2 An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values individuals

3.4.3 All service staff will work with colleagues in schools and settings to agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The staff will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred

3.4.4 Liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Cambridgeshire Sexual Behaviour Service or Locality Teams

3.4.5 A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers

3.4.6 Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse or mental health issues are vulnerable and in need of support and protection; they may also be young carers

3.4.7 Monitoring and supporting pupil’s welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Care in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board “Core Inter-Agency Procedures”

3.4.8 When a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Protection Review Manager and Lead Social Worker from Social Care will also be informed

3.4.9 When a child is missing from education, the service will follow the procedure as set out in Cambridgeshire’s Children Missing Education guidance and inform the Education Welfare Officer and Social Care if a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or there have been ongoing concerns.

3.5 **Substance Misuse and Child Protection**

3.5.1 The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the service will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:
• to believe the young person’s substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
• to believe the pupil’s substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
• where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.

3.6 **Children of Substance Misusing Parents/Carers**

3.6.1 Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

3.6.2 When the service receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child’s parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures.

3.6.3 This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

• Use of the family resources to finance the parent’s dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children
• Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers
• The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
• Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
• Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency
• Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment
• Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child
3.7 Domestic Abuse

3.7.1 Where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.

3.7.2 Head Teachers are notified of Domestic Abuse incidents where the police have been called and that involve children and young people on their roll and will take appropriate action to ensure children and young people are kept safe in accordance with the Domestic Violence Guidance for Schools.

3.8 Female genital mutilation (FGM)

3.8.1 Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a surprisingly common form of abuse in the UK.

3.8.2 FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0–15, depending on the community in which they live. It is extremely harmful and has short and long term effects on physical and psychological health.

3.8.3 FGM is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.

3.8.4 The service takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. Any indication that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy.

3.8.5 The Designated Persons will make appropriate and timely referrals to Social Care if FGM is suspected. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice. The case will still be referred to Social Care even if it is against the pupil’s wishes.

3.9 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

3.9.1 Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

3.9.2 Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship to serious organized crime involving gangs and groups.

3.9.3 Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.

3.9.4 It is important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognize it as abuse.

3.9.5 Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.
3.9.6 Schools will complete the LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool and refer to the Multi-Agency Referral Unit if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk.

4.0 PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

4.1 The service will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to the government guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2014) and the Local Authority’s Safer Employment Policy.

4.2 The following members of staff have undertaken Safer Recruitment training –

Linda Lloyd
Sibel Djemal
Lynne Donnelly

4.3 Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to the Head of service or assistant head of service. In cases where the Head of service is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to their line manager. The service will follow the procedures set out in Part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

4.4 The service will consult with the Local Authority Named Senior Officer in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

4.5 The Named Senior Officer will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) ensuring that all allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. Following consultation with the LADO, the Named Senior Officer will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that the Head of service should not seek to interview the child/ren or members of staff involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews that may be necessary.

4.6 The service will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed by the service and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

4.7 Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

4.8 Consideration must be given to the needs of the child and a recognition that a child may make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.
4.9 The service will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents/carers as advised within the Local Authority’s Code of Conduct. As part of the Induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.

4.10 All staff have signed to confirm that they have read a copy of the Local Authority’s Code of Conduct, Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (March 2009, DCSF).

4.11 The service 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 Trust).

4.12 The service will ensure that communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

5.0 OTHER RELATED POLICIES

5.1 Physical Intervention and/or the Use of Reasonable Force *(reference – DfE, use of reasonable force – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies)*
- Anti-Bullying
- Racist Incidents
- Health and Safety
- E-Safety and Acceptable Use
- Intimate Care Policy
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints procedure
- Behaviour

5.2 Use of Mobile Phones Policy

5.2.1 This is a requirement for all Nursery or primary schools with EYFS but any school may wish to adopt the policy.

5.2.2 Our policy on use of mobile phones, cameras and sharing of images is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. It is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the service has developed a policy to outline the required protocol for all staff, students volunteers and parents/carers.

*For Nursery and Primary Schools – Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

This policy was ratified on 16/05/14 and will be reviewed on May 2015.

Signed by the Head of service

Linda Lloyd

Designated Persons Carys Raymond and Angie Pike
**Four categories of abuse**

**Physical Abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Neglect** - persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child’s basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

**Emotional Abuse** - Is the persistent emotional maltreatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child’s emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- Worthless
- Unloved
- Inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet another persons needs

It may include:

- not giving the child opportunities to express their views
- deliberately silencing them
- ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- preventing participation in normal social interaction
It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone

**Sexual Abuse** – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex)
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- non-contact activities involving:
  - children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,
  - children in watching sexual activities
  - or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
  - grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
Appendix B

Useful Contacts

Education Child Protection Service Advice Line  Tel: 01223 703800
Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre (Social Care)  Tel: 0345 045 5203
Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)  Tel: 01733 234724
Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit  Tel: 101 or 01480 847743

Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board – Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures
www.cambslscb.org.uk
All staff must know how to recognise an allegation and who to report to.

If an allegation concerns the Head, the Chair of Governors takes action.

ALLEGATION

Headteacher

Discussion with Named Senior Officer for Education

Discussion between Named Senior Officer (NSO) for Education and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Refer back to school

Complex Strategy Meeting (CSM)

The next course of action and timescales are agreed at this point. Consider also:

- information for the adult, witnesses, child/young person and parents/carers
- on-going support for the member of staff, pupil and parents/carers
- statements, if needed, for the whole staff, community and press

Might arise as a complaint, grievance, suspicion, concern, during discussions from child, parent, member of staff or member of the public.

- Do not tell anyone, particularly the staff Involved
- Take advice from the Named Senior Officer (NSO) for Education before taking action
- Make initial enquiries only
- Do not investigate or interview
- Usual principles of confidentiality apply
- Deal objectively with everything
- Existing loyalties must be put to one side
- Think the unthinkable, believe the unbelievable

Keep detailed records of actions and statements at all stages

Record and date your assessments of known facts