

Offham Primary School



Safeguarding Policy

Date of Policy November 2016

Review Date November 2017

Signed – Chair of Governors

Signed – Head Teacher

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Introduction

Offham Primary School has adopted the Local Authority Exemplar Safeguarding Policy as the framework for this document.

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INTRODUCTION:

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:

- DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000)
- Kent and Medway Online Safeguarding Children Procedures (2014)

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Key contact personnel in School

Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator(s): Mrs Lisa Reason and Miss Olenka Kostiw

Named Child Protection Governor: Mrs Jane Jordan

Ofsted's definition of safeguarding

“Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes issues for schools such as: pupil health and safety; bullying; racist abuse; harassment and discrimination; use of physical intervention; meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions; providing first aid; drug and substance misuse; educational visits; intimate care; internet safety; issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity; school security.” (Briefing for Section 5 Inspectors on Safeguarding Children, Ofsted January 2014)

This policy should therefore be understood alongside school policies on related safeguarding issues as listed below. These can be found in the Staff Room and on the Staff Area of KLZ entitled Policies. The Child Protection Policy is also available to access via the school website.

Safe Guarding & Child Protection policies will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Governing Body which has responsibility for oversight of school safeguarding and child protection systems. The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator / Head Teacher will ensure regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems in school to the Governing Body. The Governing Body will not receive details of individual pupil situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

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School Policies on Related Safeguarding Issues (To be read and followed alongside this document)

- e-Safety Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Force and Restraint Policy
- Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Guidelines for Safeguarding Record Keeping in Schools
- Advice notes : Dealing with Disclosures in School
- Health and Safety Policy
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People / Code of Conduct for Staff
- KSCB document : Safer Practice with Technology
- Bullying / Anti-Bullying Procedure
- Disability and equality Policy
- Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images
- Safer Recruitment Guidelines
- Whistle-Blowing Policy

These documents can be found in the school's Safeguarding File and on the staff area of KLZ.

Some are also available to access via the school website

Contact details for Education Safeguarding Team and LADO:

Clare Ray,
Area Children's Officer for Safeguarding.
Tel: 03000 415788
Mobile: 07920 108828

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ETHOS

Our school is a community and all those directly connected (staff, governors, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. We welcome suggestions and comments that will contribute to this process.

Offham Primary School recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within school that will help children to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives.

Offham Primary School will endeavour to support the welfare and safety of all pupils through:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- Ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning.
- Ensuring that child protection is included in the curriculum to help children stay safe, recognise when they don't feel safe and identify who they might / can talk to.
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that students have a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Promoting a positive, supportive, neutral and secure environment where pupils can develop a sense of being valued and heard in their own right.
- Ensuring all steps are taken to maintain site security and student's physical safety.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication.
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

Responsibilities

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Schools form part of the wider safeguarding system for children.

All school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. All school staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

The Designated Child Protection Coordinator (DCPC) has overall responsibility for the day to day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in school. This includes

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- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns.
- Maintaining a confidential recording system.
- Co-ordinating safeguarding action for individual children.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals as necessary.
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency safeguarding meetings (including Child Protection conferences).
- Managing and monitoring the school's part in: early intervention / Child in Need / Child Protection plans.
- Organising training for all school staff.

The Governing Body and school Leadership Team will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is properly supported in this role at a time and resource level.

The welfare and safety of children however are the responsibility of all staff in school and ANY concern for a pupil's welfare MUST be reported to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) (DCPC). This is a clear duty within the School's Code of Conduct for Employees.

In order to protect confidentiality, safeguarding information about individual children is shared on a need to know basis only and thus, what may seem to be a minor issue to one staff member, may be highly significant to the bigger picture of risk.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Offham Primary School adheres to the KSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2014). The full KSCB procedures document and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found on the KSCB website www.kscb.org.uk

Additional guidance including

'What to do if you are Worried About a Child Being Abused' (DfES 2006)
Kent and Medway Inter-Agency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need
The Assessment Framework for Children in Need and their Families (2000)

These can be found in the [staffroom on the Safeguarding board.](#)

All staff have been provided with a copy of Part one of the DfE guidance "*Keeping Children Safe in Education*" that covers Safeguarding information.

It is the responsibility of the DCPC to receive and collate information regarding individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide actions necessary (with parents / carers in most cases). This includes the need to make referrals to partner agencies and services. To help with this decision she may choose to consult with the Area Education Safeguarding Adviser. Advice may also be sought from Specialist Children's Services Duty Social Workers who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the Child in Need / Child Protection process.

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Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these. Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a decision is made to refer to Specialist Children's Services or other services.

Such referrals might include referral to Specialist Children's Services as either Child Protection or Child in Need, to Police where there are potential criminal issues, referral to the Kent Integrated Family Support Service or referral to services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), counselling.

Referrals to Specialist Children's Services will be made using Kent's inter-agency referral form and with reference to the Kent and Medway Interagency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the County Duty Team. All referrals are now made via the County Duty Team unless it's already an open case.

In all but the most exceptional circumstances, parents /carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral to Specialist Children's Services being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought unless there is a valid reason not to do so.

In the absence of the availability of the DCPC or Deputy DCPC to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Education Safeguards Team (Tel: Clare Ray 03000 415788 Mobile: 07920 108828) or Specialist Children's Services (Tel: 03000 419997)

The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

On occasion, staff may pass information about a child to the DCPC, but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to clarify with the DCPC further progress, so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe and their welfare is being considered. If following this process, the staff member remains concerned that appropriate action is not being taken, it is the responsibility of that staff member to seek further direct consultation from either a member of the Education Safeguards Team or the local Specialist Children's Services Team (contact numbers as above) who will be able to discuss the concern and advise on appropriate action to be taken.

The school has a nominated governor for safeguarding named on the front of this document. The nominated governor will take the lead role in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policy and structures supporting safeguarding children are reviewed annually.

Parents can obtain a copy of the school Safeguarding Policy and other related policies on request or can view via the school website.

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Recognition and categories of abuse:

All staff in school are aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The most up to date definitions are found in Appendix 1 of this document.

Staff need to remember that child abuse can occur within all social groups regardless of religion, culture, social class or financial position. Children who have a disability are statistically subject to greater risk of abuse and are particularly vulnerable. It is also important to remember that those who abuse children can be of any age, gender, ethnic group or background and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions to prevent recognition or action taking place.

Induction and Training

All school-based staff will be offered an appropriate level of safeguarding training. This will include internal school responsibilities, child protection processes, how to recognise and respond to signs and symptoms of concern and abuse and safe working practice. Training is organised by the DCPC in line with government guidance that currently requires this to be updated every three years.

The nominated governor should receive safeguarding training from a strategic perspective on a three yearly basis, to be disseminated to the rest of the Governing Body.

The school leadership team will ensure the DCPC(s) attend the required DCPC safeguarding training when they first take up the role and that they continue to update their knowledge on an on-going basis and at least every 2 years as required by guidance.

The DCPC will ensure that all new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted as regards the school's internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines. A summary information sheet is available to be given to staff and volunteers to support this process.

The DCPC and Head Teacher will provide an annual report to the Governing Body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained.

Record Keeping

Staff must record any welfare concern that they have about a child on the school's safeguarding incident/concern form (with a body map where injuries have been observed) and pass this without delay to the DCPC. Records must be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event and must be signed and dated.

Incident/concern forms are kept in the Safeguarding File in the Staff Room.

Safeguarding records are kept separate from all other record relating to the child in school. They are retained centrally and securely by the DCPC and are shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

The Head Teacher will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DCPC.

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Detailed guidance on Record Keeping is found in a separate document “*Guidelines for Safeguarding Record Keeping in Schools*” – Staff MUST familiarise themselves with the responsibilities outlined in this document.

All safeguarding records will be forwarded to a child’s subsequent school under confidential and separate cover to the new DCPC or Head Teacher.

Allegations Against Members Of Staff And Volunteers

Offham Primary School recognises that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that might cause harm to children and takes seriously any allegation received. Such allegations should be referred immediately to the Head Teacher who will first contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member.

All staff are aware of the school’s Whistle-blowing procedure and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.

For specific guidance on how to respond to allegations against staff, please refer to the “**Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff**” which can be found in the Staff Room.

Working With Other Agencies

Offham Primary School recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children’s needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals, in discussion with parents/carers as appropriate.

Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and the school will therefore pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies. We will however contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required and recognise a crucial part of this may be in supporting the child while these take place.

Offham Primary School recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and Kent Integrated Family Support Service meetings.

The School Leadership Team and DCPC will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Head Teacher or DCPC will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child’s safety or wellbeing. Further advice on dealing with disclosures can be found in the document “**Child Protection - Dealing with Disclosures in School**”

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CURRICULUM AND STAYING SAFE

We recognise that schools play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.

Offham Primary School will use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.

Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff. Children will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

Specific systems outside of expected day to day classroom interaction and support include : School Council; play therapy, Circle Time, Chatterbox, Social Groups and visits from organisations and event days or weeks such as: Road Safety, anti-bullying and E-Safety.

E-SAFETY

It is recognised that the use of new technologies presents particular challenges and risks to children both inside and outside of school. Offham Primary School will ensure a comprehensive curriculum response to enable all pupils/students to learn about and manage the associated risks effectively and will support parents and the school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online. Detailed information can be found in the school's E-Safety policy which can be found on KLZ and on the website.

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT:

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DCPC.

All newly qualified teachers and classroom assistants have a mentor or co-ordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection.

The DCPC can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach Support Line directly.

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Safe Working Practice

Staff are required to work within clear Guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the school's Code of Conduct.

Children may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff are aware of the school's **Force and Restraint Policy** and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure.

Full advice and guidance can be found in **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People** (2009) which can be found in the Staff Room.

Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (e-mail; mobile phones; texting; social network sites) and should familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People**, the school's **e-Safety Policy**, **Employee Code of Conduct** and **Acceptable Use Policy** and the **KSCB document : Safer Practice with Technology – Guidance for Adults who Work with Children and Young People**

Complaints

The school has a **Complaints Procedure** available to parents, pupils/students and staff who wish to report concerns. This can be found on the School website www.ditton-inf.kent.sch.uk.

All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific **Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff**.

Safer Recruitment

Offham Primary School is committed to ensure that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our pupils/students and have their welfare and protection as the highest priority. The Governing Body and School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within Guidance, including accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record; and an application, vetting and recruitment process which places safeguarding at its centre, regardless of employee or voluntary role.

The Governing Body will ensure that the Head Teacher, other senior staff responsible for recruitment and one member of the Governing Body complete accredited Safer Recruitment Training in line with government requirements.

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The Use of School Premises by Other Organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Head Teacher and Governing Body will seek assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. If assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises may be refused.

SECURITY

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole-school community ethos and welcome comments from pupils/students, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitors badge whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

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APPENDIX 1 - DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse

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

Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and may include interactions beyond the child's developmental ability, overprotection, limitation of exploration or learning, prevention of normal social interaction. Seeing or hearing ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including Cyberbullying) causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or exploitation and corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

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. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, sexual images, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or 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.

Neglect

Neglect is the 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 in pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.