

Benfield School

Child Protection Policy

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Introduction

All schools are required to have a Child Protection Policy that guides the procedures and practices of staff when safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Benfield School takes very seriously its duty towards all its pupils who have been entrusted to its care and seeks to provide a school environment where all children are safe, secure, valued, respected, and listened to.

Benfield understands that our work in safeguarding and protecting children must always have regard for the national guidance issued by the Secretary of State and should be in line with local guidance and procedures.

We understand the term Safeguarding to mean;

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of health or development
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best possible outcomes.

We have a specific Safeguarding Policy and understand child protection to be a specific part of our safeguarding responsibility. We define child protection to be;

- A part of safeguarding and promoting welfare.
- Refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

We also understand that where we have any concerns about a child's welfare we will take all appropriate action to address those concerns by working in full partnership with other agencies.

All staff at Benfield School believe that a range of other school policies are central to many aspects of the school's Child Protection Policy, and this document should therefore be read in conjunction with our Policies and protocols for:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Banned Items
- Behaviour
- E-safety (including mobile use and social networking)
- First Aid
- Health & Safety (including drug and alcohol use)
- Intimate Care
- Managing Medicines
- Mobile Phone use
- Safer Recruitment
- Safe Working Practices for Staff and Volunteers
- Self Harm and Self Injury
- Smoke-free

Our Child Protection policy is written with due regard to the national guidance "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (2007) and Keeping children safe in Education (2015) published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and will be reviewed each time any subsequent guidance is issued by the Secretary of State.

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will always be compliant with the Newcastle Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures.

Within this policy we recognise the government PREVENT agenda and guidance supporting schools to manage the risks to students from radicalization, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. All staff and governors have been trained and updated on this agenda.

In order to implement child protection advice, senior staff have completed specific training and a safeguarding audit to establish the risk to our students and ensure our policies and school welfare procedures can fully support staff and students.

Our procedures will be followed by all adults, including volunteers, working with or on behalf of the school.

This policy is available to all parents either in hard copy or from our website:
www.benfield-school.co.uk

1. BENFIELD SCHOOLCHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Benfield School is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all it's pupils and the Governors expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how each individual adult working on behalf of the school has an active part to play in protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare.

- 1.1. All staff must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all pupils and must know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise.
- 1.2. To this end Benfield School will ensure that all staff, whether permanent or temporary, and volunteers know who is the member of the senior leadership team who has **designated overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding**.
- 1.3. Currently that person is **Maria Irving, Assistant Headteacher**, who has received training in order to undertake the role.
- 1.4. In her absence **Lyn Robinson, SENCO**, who has received training in order to undertake the role will deputise.
Please note: in the absence of both Maria Irving and Lyn Robinson staff must Contact Lesley Brookes (Year Leader) Neil Walker (Headteacher) or Ingrid Robertson (Deputy Headteacher).
- 1.5. All staff will receive training during their induction period, an annual update and regularly thereafter at a minimum of every 3 years in order that they are equipped with the skills needed to keep children safe.
- 1.6. Benfield School will always follow safe recruitment procedures so that we can be confident that all adults working in our school are safe to do so.

2. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

2.1 Child Protection - Responding to concerns about individual children

- 2.1.1 All children at Benfield School must be able to place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the school. They must feel sure that they can speak about any worries or concerns they may have and that they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately. All staff must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to talk to them about any matter which raises child protection concerns.

2.1.2 All staff must:

- Listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions.
- Respect the child's right to privacy but not promise confidentiality
- Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in telling.
- Explain to the child that in order to keep him/her safe from harm the information that has been shared with must be passed on.
- Report what has been disclosed to the Designated Person in the school.
- Record, as soon as is practicable, what was said using the child's actual words
- Sign and date the record.

2.1.3 The Designated Person (or deputy) for Child Protection will:

- Assess any urgent medical needs of the child.
- Consider whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm.
- Check whether the child is currently subject to a Child Protection Plan or has been previously subject to a Plan.
- Confirm whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff.
- Consider whether the matter should be discussed with the child's parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm because of delay or the parent's possible actions or reactions.
- Seek advice if unsure that a child protection referral should be made.

2.1.4 The Designated Person will either make a referral to the child's local authority children's services duty or referral and assessment team or, if a referral is not considered appropriate at that stage, make full written records of the information that they have received detailing the reasons for the judgement that the matter was not referred to the local authority.

2.2a Child Protection – Recognition and Response to Abuse

2.2.1 We expect the adults in school to notice any physical, emotional or behavioural signs that a child may be suffering significant harm. We understand that harm means the ill-treatment or impairment of a child's health and/or development, including that caused as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person.

2.2.2 All staff must therefore be alert to any possible indicators that a child is suffering harm and report any concerns to the Designated Person for Child protection.

2.2.3 All adults working in the school will receive regular Child Protection training in order that their awareness to the possibility of a child suffering remains high.

2.2b Safeguarding – Providing a Safe Environment

2.2.1 All parents and carers of pupils attending Benfield School must feel secure in the knowledge that they are entrusting their children to adults who will strive to keep them safe at school. We will do this by:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Ensuring that our staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection according to their role and responsibilities and keep a record of all training undertaken.
- Encouraging the self-esteem and self-assertiveness of all pupils through the curriculum so that the children themselves become aware of danger and risk and what is acceptable behaviour and what is not.
- Working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Displaying appropriate posters that detail contact numbers for child protection help-lines

- Always following Safer Recruitment procedures when appointing staff or volunteers to work in our school.
- Welcoming visitors in a safe and secure manner.
- Undertaking risk assessments when planning out of school activities or trips.
- Ensuring that any community groups which use our premises for the provision of services to children have child protection knowledge and understanding evidenced by a policy or are prepared to adopt our own policy.

2.3 Safeguarding & Child Protection in Specific Circumstances

2.3.1 Attendance

We are aware that a pupil's unexplained absence from school could mean that they are at risk from harm.

- (1) We will always report an unexplained absence of a child with a Child Protection Plan to the child's social worker within one day
- (2) We will always seek to clarify the reason for a child's absence from school with the child's parent or carer as soon as is practicable on the first day
- (3) We will always report a continued absence about which we have not been notified by the parent or carer to the Local Authority
- (4) We will always report to the local authority the name of any child who has been newly registered to attend our school but does not arrive on the expected day
- (5) We will always report to the Local Authority the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to school on the expected return date.

2.3.2 Pupil Behaviour

We will always aim to maintain a safe and calm environment by expecting good behaviour from our pupils in line with our behaviour policy.

We are aware that any physical response from a member of staff to a pupil's poor behaviour could lead to a child protection concern being raised by the child or parent/carer.

- (1) Members of staff will only use force when dealing with a pupil's breach of our behaviour policy if the potential consequences of not physically intervening would lead to a student being harmed or injured.
- (2) We will always record any occasion when physical intervention has been necessary
- (3) We will always notify parents or carers of any such incident

2.3.3. Bullying

We understand that bullying is harmful to children. We have an anti-bullying policy that sets out our aim of ensuring no child becomes a victim of bullying and the work that we carry out in school to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is known to be unacceptable and not tolerated. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

We understand that bullying can take different forms and may include racist or homophobic behaviour. Any such reported or observed incident will be dealt with in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

2.3.4. E-Safety

We recognise that children's use of the Internet is an important part of their education but that there are risks of harm associated with its use. We have an e-safety policy that addresses how

we minimise those risks in school and teach children how to stay safe when using the internet in their lives out of school.

We also recognise that all members of staff and volunteer staff must always be mindful of the need to follow our policy of acceptable use of our IT equipment.

2.3.5. **Health & Safety**

We have a Health & Safety Policy which demonstrates the consideration we give to minimising any risk to the children when on the school premises and when undertaking activities out of school under the supervision of our staff.

2.4 Working Together with Parents/Carers

2.4.1. **Pupil Information**

We recognise the importance of keeping up-to-date and accurate information about pupils. We will regularly ask all parents/carers to provide us with the following information and to notify us of any changes that occur.

- names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility
- emergency contact details
- details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- name and contact detail of G.P.
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

2.4.2. **Confidentiality**

Information about pupils given to us by the children themselves, their parents or carers, or by other agencies will remain confidential. Staff will be given relevant information only a "need to know" basis in order to support the child if that is necessary and appropriate.

We are, however, under a duty to share any information which is of a child protection nature. We understand that this is in the best interests of the child and overrides any other duties we have regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

We have a duty to keep any records which relate to child protection work undertaken by us or our partner agencies and to ensure that these are kept apart from the main pupil record, stored securely and only accessible to key members of staff. We also have a duty to send copies of these records to any school to which the pupil transfers.

2.4.3. **Referrals to partner agencies**

If we have a reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child we will always seek to discuss this with the child's parents or carers in the first instance. On occasion, according to the nature of our concern, it may be necessary for us to make an immediate referral to Children's Services when to do otherwise may put the child at risk of further harm either because of delay, or because of the actions of the parents or carers.

2.4.4. **Sharing our Policy**

This policy is available to all parents and parents of prospective pupils.

2. ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

3.1 Safer Recruitment

3.1.1 All staff and volunteers working with children in our school will be recruited safely:

Preparation

We will always consider the vacancy that has arisen within the context of safeguarding children and ensure that we include the responsibility to safeguard children within the requirements of the role.

We always consider carefully the knowledge skills and experience required to safeguard children and include these within a person specification.

Advertising

We will always advertise our vacancies in a manner that is likely to attract a wide range of applicants.

The advertisement will always include a statement about our commitment to safeguarding children and our expectation that all applicants will share that commitment.

The advertisement will state that the post is subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.

Applications

We will ensure that our application form enables us to gather information about the candidates' suitability to work with children by asking specific and direct questions.

We will scrutinise all completed application forms.

We will not accept CVs

References

We will not accept open references or testimonials.

We will ask for the names of at least two referees.

We will take up references prior to interview and ask specific questions about the candidate's previous employment or experience of working with children.

We will follow up any vague or ambiguous statements.

Interviews

We will always conduct a face to face interview even when there is only one candidate.

Our interview panel will always contain at least one member trained in safer recruitment practice.

Our interview questions will seek to ensure we understand the candidate's values and beliefs that relate to children.

All candidates will be asked to bring original documents which confirm their identity, qualifications, and right to work.

Appointments

Our offer of appointment will be conditional on all requested checks having been returned as satisfactory.

We will refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority any person whose checks reveal that they have sought work when barred from working with children.

Induction

We will always provide newly appointed staff with appropriate guidance about safe working practice, boundaries and propriety and explain the consequences of not following the guidance.

Continuing Professional Development

We will ensure that all staff receive regular training in Child Protection.

Supervision

We will always supervise staff and act on any concerns that relate to the safeguarding of children.

Allegations

We will always follow our locally agreed procedures for the management of allegations against staff.

Dismissal

We will always refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority any member of staff who is dismissed because of misconduct relating to a child.

3.2 Safe Practice

3.2.1 We understand that all adults working in or on behalf of our school have a duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare. We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for our children through the relationship we have with them and their parents or carers and will always seek to ensure that all adults working in our school behave in a manner that fosters this relationship.

3.2.2. We will ensure that all staff are clear about the expectations we have of their behaviour towards all children and that any incident that falls below our expected standards will be dealt with appropriately.

3. MONITORING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY AND PRACTICE

4.1. Our Designated Person(s) for Child Protection Maria Irving and Lyn Robinson will continually monitor our child protection and safeguarding practices and bring to the notice of the headteacher and governors any weaknesses or deficiencies.

4.2. The Governing Body has a duty to remedy any weaknesses that are identified.

3.3.2. An annual report will be submitted to the Governors which will outline the child protection and safeguarding work we have undertaken during the year. Names of children will not be shared. Included in the report will be details of:

- The names of members of staff with designated child protection responsibilities
- Confirmation that all new staff and volunteers have been recruited safely and that a record of all staff vetting checks is up-to-date and complete
- The training that has been undertaken by the designated staff
- The training that has been undertaken by all other staff and volunteers
- Details of any incidents when physical restraint of pupils has been used
- Details of information and guidance that has been given to staff
- Details of safeguarding and child protection issues included in the curriculum
- Confirmation that all child protection records are stored securely and where appropriate have been transferred to another school
- Details of safeguarding and child protection information given to parents
- Details of the safety of the school site and the access given to visitors
- Confirmation that all school lettings have been agreed with consideration given to the safeguarding of children

- Numbers of child protection referrals made to Children's Services
- Details of child protection conferences or meetings attended regarding children (names of children are not shared)
- Numbers of children who are, or have been, subject to a Child Protection Plan

3.4. The Governors, Headteacher and Designated Staff will work together on any aspect of Safeguarding and Child Protection that is identified as an area for development over the coming year.

3.5. Our Policy will be reviewed annually with Governors.

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