Blakehill Primary School

Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy and Procedure



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| **Headteacher** | **Chair of Governors** | **Review Dates** |
|  |  | Last Review: November 2023 |
| Lisa Keighley | Philip Cavalier-Lumley | Next Review: November 2024 |

# Statement of intent

Blakehill Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every pupil both inside and outside of the school premises. Blakehill has a whole school approach to safeguarding whereby safeguarding and child protection underpin all relevant policy and processes. This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

* Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
* Educating pupils on how to keep safe and to recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
* Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to abuse.
* Understand that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.
* Ensuring that members of the governing body, the Headteacher and staff members understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, and are alert to the signs of child abuse and know to refer concerns to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
* Ensuring that the Headteacher and any new staff members and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.
* Provide all children including LGBTQ+ children with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

The DSL is: Catherine Scott. In the absence of the DSL, child protection matters will be dealt with by Helen Hall or Lisa Keighley.

# Safeguarding Statement

At Blakehill Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Blakehill Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. We have a zero-tolerance approach, and even if there are no reported cases, staff must not take the view that abuse does not happen here. Being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, may breach children’s rights, as set out in the Human Rights Act.

# Aims

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. We wish our pupils to remain safe and free from harm. We are committed to playing a full and active part in the multi‐agency response to Child Protection.

Our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance. We believe in open and honest communication with parents and guardians.

Children are best protected when professionals work effectively together and share responsibility for protective action.

# Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The governing body has adopted the current Bradford Safeguarding Children’s Board

(BSCB) child protection procedures Bradford Safeguarding Children Board and statutory legislation;

* *Keeping children safe in education (September 2018) – updated 2023;*
* *Working together to safeguard children (September 2018) – updated 2019;*
* *What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (March 2015);*
* *Information sharing – Advice for safeguarding practitioners’ (March 2015)–updated 2019;*
* *The Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 (section 26 Prevent duty);*
* *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (February 2015);*
* *Safer working Practice Guidance (October 2015);*
* *Children missing education (September 2016);*
* *Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended 2016);*
* *UKCCIS, Sexting in Schools and Colleges; Responding to incidents and safeguarding*
* *young people;*
* *Serious Crime Act (2015) (section B of the Female Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by*
* *section 74);*
* *Children and Social Care Act (2017);*
* *Children Act 1989 (as amended 2004 s52);*
* *The Teacher Standards’ 2012;*
* *Education Act 2002 s175/s157;*
* *Equality Act 2010 – updated 2018*
* *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003/Serious Crime Act (2015)*
* *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)*
* *Childcare Act (2006)*
* *GDPR/Data Protection Act (2018)*
* *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children inn schools and colleges: advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (2021)*

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors. We ensure that all staff read and understand at least Part one and Annex A of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2023* guidance, which is provided at

induction and ensures Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities in accordance with this guidance.

There are three main elements to our Child Protection Policy:

# Prevention:

* + Through the creation of an open culture which respects all individual’s rights and discourages discrimination and bullying of any kind;
  + Through a positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils. Pastoral support is the responsibility of all staff working in school;
  + By identifying a member of staff –
    - **Mrs Catherine Scott (EYFS Leader and Designated Safeguarding Lead**) ‐ with overall responsibility for Child Protection who is supported by other designated child protection staff, known as named persons;
    - Mrs Helen Hall (Assistant Headteacher)
    - Mrs Lisa Keighley (Headteacher)
  + The named governors for Safeguarding and Child Protection are: L Powell, E Chellam and I Parsons whose role is to liaise with named persons and school staff on all matters

relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection, participate in the annual review of policy and procedures and make an annual report to the full Governing Body.

* + Through the PSHCE curriculum and an ongoing programme of support, at an age‐ appropriate level to promote self‐esteem and social inclusion and address the issue of Child Protection in the wider context of child safety in general.

# Protection:

* + By following agreed procedures ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns;
  + Through fostering an ethos of “collective responsibility” within school where staff communicate concerns timely and through appropriate school systems.

# Support:

* + By working to support any pupil or member of staff who may have been abused and by working to support parents or guardians.

***This policy applies to teaching and non‐teaching staff, and to all others working within school.***

# Confidentiality Statement

It is imperative that staff **do not** promise confidentiality to any child. If Staff should be given any information by a child, or observe symptoms which give rise to suspicion of abuse, then the Child Protection procedures on the ‘Action Flow Chart’ (KCSiE 2023) must be followed.

# Definition of Abuse

**“***A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.” Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*

# Categories of abuse

When a child makes an allegation about abuse or neglect they will be listened to, have their comments taken seriously and, where appropriate, the allegations will be investigated thoroughly. It is not the role of school staff to undertake any such investigation.

Blakehill Primary School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support the pupils in our school. The following categories of abuse are recognised:

1. **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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer 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);
  + Or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

1. **Physical abuse**: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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.
2. **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 assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative act including masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

This may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

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

1. **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 the child.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

1. **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM**): is a violation of the human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK. If a teacher, in the course of their

work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. This is a mandatory reporting duty.

1. **Honour based crime:** this includes forced marriage, breast ironing and FGM.
2. **Child on child abuse:** can take different forms, such as:
   * bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
   * abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
   * physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
   * sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Risk of child on child abuse is minimised through:

* + Having relevant policies in place (e.g. behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy)
  + Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued (e.g. Learning Mentor)
  + Providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.
  + Developing robust risk assessments where appropriate

At Blakehill we recognise the importance of explaining to children that the law is in place to protect rather than criminalise them. We recognise the importance of understanding intra- familial harms, and any necessary support for siblings following incidents. We also understand the need for schools and colleges to be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners.

At Blakehill we recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported

Any incidents of child on child abuse would be investigated and dealt with by the DSL following the guidance in KCSiE 2023 and in line with the Anti Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy. Victims will be supported via the school’s pastoral systems or any other relevant agencies. The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the Brook Advisory Service will be used to help professionals; assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at [www.brook.org.uk/our-](http://www.brook.org.uk/our-) work/the-sexual behaviours-traffic-light-tool.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Staff are very clear that abuse is abuse and should never be passed as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’ as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

If a report is made about child on child abuse:

* + The victim will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.
  + If possible, reports will be managed with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible;
  + Where the report includes an online element, staff should be aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi- nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. Staff must not view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection;
  + Staff should not promise confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or children’s social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
  + Staff should recognise that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;
  + Staff should recognise that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse;
  + Staff should keep in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
  + Staff should listen carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child’s language, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was;
  + Staff should consider the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made;
  + Staff should only record the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Staff should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children’s social care and/or part of a criminal investigation; and
  + Staff should inform the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

*Please refer to our Child on Child Abuse Policy*

1. **Domestic Abuse:** can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. It can impact on children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships.

# Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

* + Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s impairment without further exploration;
  + Assumptions that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by things like bullying- without outwardly showing any signs;
  + Communication barriers and difficulties
  + Reluctance to challenge carers, (professionals may over empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child)
  + Disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased.
  + A disabled child’s understanding of abuse.
  + Lack of choice/participation
  + Isolation

# Procedures

Where it is believed a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm we will follow the procedures below which are guided our Local Authority Safeguarding Board directives. The

school’s policies and procedures comply with the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board(BSCB), soon to be the Multi-Agency Partnership(MAP).

The school keeps full and accurate records of concerns, reports and referrals made which are stored securely to maintain confidentiality via our online child protection system (CPOMS).

# What all staff must do:

“If *staff have a concern, they should act on it. They should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action. Staff should also me mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective for identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Staff should not assume that other professionals will share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.”*

# Staff responsibilities:

* + To be vigilant in order to identify potential incidences of abuse;
  + To report immediately to the designated named person/s;
  + To complete documentation for external agencies as appropriate;

It is not the teacher’s role to investigate suspected abuse but rather to recognise it and refer it as appropriate to the designated named person/s.

Wherever possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) who will help staff to decide what to do next. Options include:

* + Managing any support for the child internally via the school’s own pastoral support processes;
  + An Early Help Assessment;
  + Or, a referral for statutory services, for example as the child is in need of suffering or likely to suffer harm.

# Designated named person’s responsibilities:

* + To co‐ordinate actions in the school and liaise with agencies over suspected or actual cases of child abuse;
  + Identify the signs and symptoms of suspected or actual abuse and when to make a referral;
  + To ensure that staff observe and implement school's agreed protocol;
  + To facilitate training for all staff and governors;
  + To authorise and support referral to the relevant and appropriate authority;
  + To keep full and accurate records of concerns, reports and referrals made which are stored securely to maintain confidentiality via our online child protection system (CPOMS).

# Training and Support

We will ensure that the Headteacher, Named Persons, Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor attend Child Protection training relevant to their role. Governors should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and then at regular intervals. Training should provide them with the knowledge to ensure their school’s safeguarding policies and procedures are effective. School staff will also receive basic Child Protection awareness training and be kept informed through dissemination and our INSET programme.

# Helping children to keep themselves safe

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons and through all aspects of School life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with staff work out how those risks might be overcome. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety, and tackling bullying procedures. The School continually promotes an ethos of respect for children, and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any worries they may have.

# Allegations against staff, volunteers and other children

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

* Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact within their personal, professional or community life.

# What school staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school?

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or education setting’s safeguarding arrangements.

Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place for such concerns to be raised with the school senior leadership team.

If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the Headteacher. Where there are concerns about the Headteacher, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors as appropriate. The Chair of Governors in this school is: Mr Phil Cavalier Lumley. In the absence of the Chair of Governors, the Vice Chair should be contacted.

In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher or where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, allegations should be reported directly to Danielle Wilson (BSCB) who will then decide whether it needs to be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the Designated Senior Person if appropriate make any referral via them. (See Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part Four, DFE 2023, for further information).

Low level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers: and school should consult their LADO if unsure whether low level concerns shared about a member of staff meet the harm threshold. Low level concerns about staff can be shared with the DSL or Headteacher. The Headteacher should ultimately be informed of all low level concerns and make the final decision on how to respond. This can be done in consultation with the DSL.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to local authority children’s social care, the police or the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285), if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against other children in the School. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others or may be subjected to child on child abuse. Their behaviour will be dealt with under the *School’s*

*Behaviour Policy/Anti-bullying policy*. All allegations of this nature are reported immediately to the Headteacher for investigation and action.

# Equality Act 2010

* + According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).
  + Whilst all of the above protections are important in the context of safeguarding, this guidance and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges, in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race.
  + Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need. This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people, including those with long term conditions. A school or college, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

# Public Sector Equality Duty

* + The PSED places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics (see para 87) and means that whenever significant decisions are being 26 made or policies developed, specific consideration must be given to the equality implications of these such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them, such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism. This is one reason why good record-keeping and monitoring of all forms of abuse and harassment is essential.
  + The PSED helps schools and colleges (which are subject to it) to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil and student outcomes. Some pupils or students may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. Such concerns will differ between education settings, but it is important schools and colleges are conscious of disproportionate vulnerabilities and integrate this into their safeguarding policies and procedures. For further information please see Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)

# This policy should be read in conjunction with our other related school policies such as:

* + Safeguarding policy
  + Child on Child Abuse policy
  + Behaviour for learning policy including appendices
  + Anti‐bullying policy
  + Exclusions
  + Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Inclusion policy
  + Health and Safety policy
  + Relationships, Sex and Education (RSE) policy
  + Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) policy
  + Intimate Care policy
  + Data protection policy
  + Safer Recruitment policy
  + Whistleblowing
  + E-safety
  + Online Safety policy
  + Staff [behaviour policy/code of conduct]
  + IT acceptable use policy