**Valley Primary School**

****

**Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**

**Updated: September 2016**

**Review Date: September 2017**

**Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy**

**School Vision**

At Valley Primary School Academy Trust, we are committed to providing an inspiring and inclusive environment linking to local, national and global communities. We actively encourage and develop independent lifelong learners, who are able to fulfil their dreams and aspirations. Valley Primary School Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**School’s Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

Mr S Jackson: Headteacher

Mrs Anderson: Family Worker

Mrs Bradley: Assistant Headteacher

Mrs Coulson: Assistant Headteacher

Designated Safeguarding Governor: Mrs H Randall

Bromley Referrals and assessments team:

Bromley LADO: Lorrisa Webber

Date of Last review: July 2016

Reviewed by: S Jackson & H Randall

Agreed by: Full Governing Body

Shared with staff:

Frequency of review: Annually

Date of next review: July 2017

The governors and staff at Valley Primary School Academy Trust fully recognise the responsibility it has to the safeguarding and protection of pupils. All governors and staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting children and young people from harm.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual pupil.

**CONTENT**

1. Purpose and Aims
2. Procedures
3. Statutory Framework
4. The Role of the Governing Body
5. The Role of the Headteacher
6. The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
7. The Roles & Responsibilities of all Staff within school
8. Safeguarding Training
9. Promoting the Well-Being of Children and Young People
10. Dealing with concerns or disclosures regarding a child or young person (including protocol for staff when there are allegations or incidents of abuse; includes a requirement for all verbal notifications to the designated person for safeguarding to be confirmed by dated written communication)
11. Confidentiality
12. Communication with Parents
13. Record Keeping
14. Safer Recruitment
15. Dealing with Concerns regarding School Staff/Volunteers

Appendix 1: Cause for Concern Form

1. **Purpose and Aims**

Valley Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to safeguard children. Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers, governors and visitors in the school. Our aims are:

* + To support the child’s development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
	+ To raise awareness of all staff, including volunteers, of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
	+ To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
	+ The school will have procedures and protocols which will be followed by all staff in cases of suspected abuse and/or the need for care.
	+ To develop and promote working relationships with other agencies as outlined in ‘*Working* *Together To Safeguard Children’.*
	+ To ensure that all adults who have unsupervised access to children have been checked as to their suitability and have an enhanced DBS disclosure, as well as being checked against the Independent Safeguarding Authority’s (ISA) barred list (replaces List 99). The school will implement recruitment procedures as recommended in *Safeguarding* *Children and Safer Recruitment 2007*.
1. **Procedures**

Our procedures will be in line with Bromley Procedures. We will ensure that:

* We have a Designated Member of staff/Officer who will, in line with recommendations in the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment 2007, (2.19) undertake training and refresher training at two yearly intervals.
* All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse or need. (Appendix 2)
* All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse.
* All staff will be kept up-dated on safeguarding issues and will be able to identify concerns and understand procedures to protect and safeguard children and young people. Issues include: Children Missing from Care and Home, Sexually Exploited Children, Children Witnessing Domestic Violence, Young Carers, Young Runaways, Forced Marriages, Female Genital Mutilation, Preventing Radicalisation and Fabricated illness.
* All staff receive annual Safeguarding training.
* All members of staff are aware of any immediate/urgent action required to assist the child, eg emergency medical treatment.
	+ All members of staff will report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) using the ‘Concerns Form’ (Appendix 3).
	+ All parents/carers will be made aware of the school Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures.
	+ All staff are responsible for reporting concerns regarding a colleague's behaviour. As outlined in the school’s Whistle-blowing Policy.
	+ The school procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.
	+ All staff will have seen a copy of this policy and new staff will be given a copy as part of their induction programme.
	+ Governors will receive regular reports about numbers of child protection referrals, allegations against school staff and other child protection/safeguarding matters.
1. **Statutory Framework**

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, we will act in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

* The Children Act 1989 & 2004
* The Education Act 2002 (section 175)
* The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
* Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (DfE, 2011)
* Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015)
* Disqualification Under the Childcare Act (DfE, 2016)
* The Prevent Duty (DfE, 2015)
* Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills (DfE 2015)
* Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE2016)
* Procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. (LSCB)
1. **The Role of the Governing Body**

Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Governing Body will:

* Through the Headteacher, remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to the attention of the school management or Governing Body.
* Ensure that senior members of staff of the school’s leadership team are identified to take the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
* Ensure that the school has a nominated governor responsible for child protection, to take lead responsibility in the Governing Body for Safeguarding and Child Protection, and to provide support and challenge to the DSL to ensure that the work of the school conforms to this policy.
* Ensure that a safeguarding audit is completed annually by the Headteacher and nominated child protection governor.
* Ensure that on arrival at school all visitors (including contractors) are provided with a copy of the safeguarding policy making them aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
* Make this policy available to parents and carers through the school website and ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
* Ensure that children and young people are taught about keeping themselves safe.
* Ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015). This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter- agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. This covers a range of work such as: Working with the CAF team regarding resistant families, working to help identify children and young people who are privately fostered, working to help protect children from extremist and violent views through multi-agency work.
* Ensure that the school develops effective links with relevant agencies and co-operates as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences.
* Ensure procedures are in place that Social Care are notified immediately (on the first day of absence) if there is an unexplained absence of a child on a Child Protection Plan.
* Ensure there are procedures for contacting the child’s social worker directly if there is an unexplained absence of a child who is Looked After. This will then trigger actions identified in the ‘Joint Police and Social Care Protocol for Dealing with Children Missing from Care’.
* Ensure that the school’s Child Protection procedures are in accordance with Local

 Authority guidance and inter-agency procedures agreed through the Local Safeguarding

 Children Board.

* Ensure there is a staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, which links to this child protection policy, and which is shared with all current staff and forms part of the induction training for new staff.
* Ensure that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer.
* Review this Safeguarding / Child Protection policy, and its effectiveness, annually (no later than the date of next review given on the front cover).
1. **The Role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the duties as set out in Section 4 of this policy and the monitoring of the effectiveness of the school’s policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.

The Headteacher, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Leads, is to ensure that this policy and associated procedures are followed by all staff:

The Headteacher is to ensure that the school is alert to possible private fostering arrangements, and that in the school admission process, the parents/carers resident with each child or young person indicate whether they are parent, other relative (to be specified), friend of the family, or other (to be specified).

1. **The Role of the Safeguarding Lead**

The broad areas of responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead involve managing referrals/cases and raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.

In making decisions on whether to refer child protection concerns/disclosures to Children’s Social Care the Designated Safeguarding Lead must use A child’s journey in Bromley threshold guidance available at: [http://www.bromleysafeguarding.org/pdfs/A%20Childs\_Journey\_in\_Bromley\_Threshold%20Guidan](http://www.bromleysafeguarding.org/pdfs/A%20Childs_Journey_in_Bromley_Threshold%20Guidance_Dec_2015.pdf) [ce\_Dec\_2015.pdf](http://www.bromleysafeguarding.org/pdfs/A%20Childs_Journey_in_Bromley_Threshold%20Guidance_Dec_2015.pdf)

The DSL will consult with the Referral and Assessment Service if still unsure on whether to refer.

1. **The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School**

All staff and volunteers must read this policy and Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Appendix 1) and ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to report and record any concerns or disclosures.

As part of the staff induction process and / or annually on the first day of the Autumn Term, staff are required to read this policy and all other related policies and sign to say that the policies have been read and understood. This signed declaration is kept in the staff member’s personnel file.

All staff and volunteers must act in accordance with this policy if a child he/she presents with indicators of abuse (see Appendix 2 for details). Procedures for reporting concerns and dealing with a disclosure are given in section 10.

If there are concerns or allegations regarding a member of staff or the Headteacher then the processes outlined in section 15 of this document must be followed.

1. **Safeguarding Training**

The Headteacher must undertake training on child protection at least once every three years (statutory requirement), at LSCB level 3/4 or above. If the Headteacher is the Designated Safeguarding Lead then he/she shall meet the training requirements set out below.

* In addition to basic child protection training the Designated Safeguarding Lead must attend the LSCB’s Level 3/4 Working Together to Safeguard Children training, and then undertake refresher safeguarding training at LSCB Level 3/4 at least every three years (statutory requirement).
* The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead must meet the training requirements as above.

Any newly appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead must attend the LSCB’s Level 3/4 Working Together to Safeguard Children training before taking lead responsibility for safeguarding. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will take a leading role on safeguarding for the short time that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is waiting to receive training.

All other staff, who work with children, will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at LSCB level 3, or its equivalent, to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively. This must be kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals, and temporary staff and volunteers who work with children must be made aware of the school’s arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.

The Chair of Governors, the designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection and Local Authority appointed Governors will undertake the Local Authority’s governor safeguarding training at least once every three years. All new members of staff will receive child protection training as indicated in above as part of their induction programme.

Briefings and updates on child protection and safeguarding procedures (including the signs of abuse and procedures for reporting concerns and disclosures) will be provided on a regular basis, at least annually, but more frequently when necessary, to ensure that all members of staff are familiar with any changes to the school policy as they occur.

At least one member of every appointments panel will have gained accreditation through Safer Recruitment training. The school will ensure that there are always sufficient numbers of suitably trained staff or governors in post. All interview paperwork will state the names of panel members and highlight which members have received safer recruitment training.

1. **Promoting Children and Young People's Well-being**

The school will teach children about safeguarding and ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015). This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

The model sets out a single assessment, planning and review pathway for all children and young people, ensuring that needs are identified earlier and addressed an a multi-agency basis, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Child Protection procedures shall be seen within the context of this broader framework as a response when there is a perceived need to protect a child or young person who is at risk of significant harm.

1. **Dealing with concerns or disclosures regarding a child or young person**

All staff and volunteers must be aware that the four main categories of abuse which may result in a child being placed on the Child Protection Register are:

* Physical abuse
* Emotional abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Neglect

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflictingharm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

**Physical abuse**: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning orscalding, 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.

**Emotional abuse**: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe andadverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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. These may include interactions that are beyond a 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, 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. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They 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 (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**: the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/orpsychological needs, likely toresult 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.

**Indicators of Abuse**

NB: This guidance is provided as a useful reminder of the indicators of abuse but should always be considered within the context of a comprehensive training programme and not as a substitute for more in depth consideration.

**Indicators of Physical Abuse**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

* Unexplained injuries including burns, particularly if they are recurrent
* Improbably excuses given to explain injuries
* Refusal to discuss injuries
* Untreated injuries
* Admission of punishment which seems excessive
* Bald patches
* Withdrawal from physical contact
* Arms and legs covered, even in hot weather
* Fear of returning home
* Fear of medical help
* Self-destructive tendencies
* Aggression towards others
* Running away

**Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

* Physical and/or mental and/or emotional development lags
* Admission of punishment that appears excessive
* Over-reaction to mistakes
* Continual self-deprecation
* Sudden speech disorders
* Fear of new situations
* Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
* Neurotic behaviour eg. thumb sucking, hair twisting, rocking
* Self mutilation
* Fear of parents being contacted
* Extremes of passivity or aggression
* Drug/solvent abuse
* Running away
* Compulsive stealing or scavenging.

**Indicators of Sexual Abuse**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

* Sudden changes in behaviour or in school performance
* Displays of affection in a sexual way, inappropriate to age
* Tendency to cling or need reassurance
* Regression to younger behaviour eg. thumb sucking, acting like a baby, playing with discarded toys
* Complaints of genital itching or pain, or anal pain
* Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, babysitter or lodger
* Unexplained gifts or money
* Depression and withdrawal
* Apparent secrecy
* Bedwetting, daytime wetting and/or soiling
* Sleep disturbances, nightmares
* Chronic illness, eg. throat infection, venereal disease or other STD
* Anorexia, bulimia
* Unexplained pregnancy
* Fear of undressing, eg. for sport
* Phobias or panic attacks

**Indicators of Neglect**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused.

* Constant hunger
* Poor personal hygiene
* Constant tiredness
* Poor state of clothing
* Emaciation
* Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
* Untreated medical problems
* Destructive tendencies
* Low self esteem
* Neurotic behaviour
* No social relationships
* Running away
* Compulsive stealing or scavenging

**Specific safeguarding issues**

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the TES website and also on its own website www.nspcc.org.uk Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

* child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see also below
* bullying including cyberbullying
* domestic violence
* drugs
* fabricated or induced illness
* faith abuse
* female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
* forced marriage
* gangs and youth violence
* gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
* mental health
* private fostering
* radicalisation
* sexting
* teenage relationship abuse
* trafficking

**Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

**Indicators**

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines , and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (pp42-44) focuses on the role of schools and colleges. Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) gives the Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons. Once the government issues any statutory multi-agency guidance this will apply to schools and colleges.

**Actions**

If staff have a concern they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care. When mandatory reporting commences in October 2015 these procedures will remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

**Mandatory Reporting Duty**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

The Mandatory reporting duty will commence in October 2015. Once introduced, teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

**The Counter Terrorism & Security Act (2015) & the Prevent duty**

Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the government’s counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

**The Prevent strategy**

* Responds to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views.
* Provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
* Works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to deal with.

The strategy covers all forms of terrorism, including far right extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism.

**The Counter Terrorism & Security Act (2015):**

This Act places a duty on specified authorities including schools, Further and Higher Education, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty).

AtValley Primary School Academy Trust, we are committed to supporting vulnerable students through our safeguarding policies and procedures and recognise that this will support the school’s contribution to the Prevent duty.

We build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling our pupils to challenge extremist views.

The school engages positively with appropriate training to ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to refer any concerns appropriately.

Referral for any issue concerning potential radicalisation to extremism should be managed as any other safeguarding referral. The Headteacher provides the lead for the school on Prevent and can be contacted directly for any concerns or for clarification on process.

Valley Primary School Academy Trustis committed to working closely and in harmony with its community and celebrating the diversity of the UK. We aim to prepare children for life in modern Britain and to ensure that our school ethos, curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning reflect and promote British values.

We recognise that these values are not exclusive to being British and that they have come to be accepted throughout the democratic world as the method of creating an orderly society in which individual members can feel safe, valued and can contribute to for the good of themselves and others.

We work alongside our local community and recognise the variety of religious beliefs within it. We take children outside the school to take part in local events and meet different members of the community to appreciate the valuable contributions they make.

We take opportunities to:

* acknowledge, celebrate and commemorate national events and anniversaries related to key events in Britain’s past
* join in with international sporting events and find out more about the countries that host them
* support a number of charities that are selected by the children and arrange fundraising events
* invite members of the local community to our school events.

We understand the role that our school has in helping prevent radicalisation and supporting our children in developing a world view recognising Britain’s place within it. The four British values are:

* democracy
* the rule of law
* individual liberty
* mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Please refer to the school’s Prevent Policy to learn more about how we safeguard pupils and staff from extremism and radicalisation and promote Fundamental British Values.

**Peer to Peer Abuse.**

As part of the school’s annual safeguarding updates, all staff are made aware of the fact that children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school’s Anti-Bullying procedures where necessary.However, there will be occasions, when a pupil’s behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures such as incidents of sexting.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil’s sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to one of the school’s DSLs as soon as possible.

**Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

At Valley Primary Academy Trust, the Governors and staff understand that children with special educational needs can be faced with additional safeguarding challenges.

The possible additional barriers to recognising abuse or neglect in pupils with SEN include:

* assumptions that indictors of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability or additional need without further exploration;
* children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by things like bullying without showing any outwardly showing any signs;
* communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To avoid the abuse or neglect of pupils with SEN going unnoticed, the following procedures are in place:

* during the weekly safeguarding briefings, staff are challenged to clarify their concerns when discussing pupils with SEN as to whether concerning behaviour is linked to the disability or additional need or the result of abuse;
* Pupils with SEN who are subject to an Individual Provision Map(IPM), communicate their feelings about themselves and school through the termly review of the their IPM;
* Pupils are encouraged to talk to staff members about any concerns they might have and are free to communicate their concerns through the worry box system in pictorial form.

**The Safeguarding of Looked After Children (LAC)**

At Valley Primary School Academy Trust, it is recognised that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and / or neglect.

The Governing Body ensure that all staff receives attachment training and other suitably appropriate training in order to raise awareness of the additional needs and behaviours of children who are looked after.

The school’s Family Worker is the staff member responsible for:

* Promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after;
* Liaising with the Virtual Head to agree appropriate provision and the spending of Pupil Premium funding;
* Sharing the necessary information with relevant staff relating to the child’s looked after status and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

**REASONS WHY SOME PEOPLE HESITATE TO REPORT ABUSE**

The following list contains a range of reasons why people commonly hesitate to report abuse. It is provided for information, but be aware that none of these reasons is a justification for failing to report a child protection concern or disclosure.

* The child asks you to keep silent – keep a secret
* Fear of breaking up the family
* Fear of exposing the child to further abuse
* Fear of breaking a trusting relationship with child/family
* Painful memories of your own abusive experiences
* Fear of reprisals to yourself/your children/family
* Fear of presenting evidence in court
* Afraid of misinterpreting or overreacting to the situation
* Assuming another agency is dealing with the problem
* The 'rule of optimism' – everything will work out OK
* Assuming one parent/carer will protect
* Believing the child is fantasising/lying
* Being persuaded by the child's retraction
* Allowing a temporary improvement in the child's situation to distract you from the reality of continuing abuse
* Being unable to comprehend the unbelievable nature of the disclosure

**WHY CHILDREN CANNOT TELL ABOUT ABUSE**

* Threats from abuse – withdrawal of 'favours' or physical threats – may be implicit derived from abuse of power
* Threats from peers also involved in abuse
* May think s/he is to blame and fear arrest
* Fear the loss of the child's world – family, school etc
* May be emotionally dependent on abuser
* May have compartmentalised abuse
* Thinks will not be believed
* Low sense of self-esteem makes disclosure difficult
* May not realise sexual abuse is a crime – thinks it’s normal
* May not wish to betray abuser
* May fear exposure and particularly public exposure
* May be ambivalent about sexual identity or feel guilt about taking part in abuse
* Lack of faith in justice system particularly for children with disabilities and from ethnic minorities
* Lack of appropriate language skills

**WHY REFER?**

* Children have the right to be safe
* Adults have a responsibility to protect children
* Abuse is damaging
* Child abuse exists in a world of secrecy and silence – the cycle of abuse has to be broken
* You only have one small piece of a jigsaw
* Children rarely lie about abuse
* An abuser may well abuse many other children who also have a right to protection

**For guidance, advice and support, contact the Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Service Telephone: 0208 461 7373**

If any member of staff has a concern that a child in their care has suffered any of these forms of abuse, they must report their concerns to, and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, as soon as possible, and never later than the end of the working day. If there is concern as to whether it is safe to allow the child to go home that day, then all effort must be made to inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately so that the Referral and Assessment Service can be informed and the necessary protective measures implemented.

A child may disclose sensitive information at any time of the day, and in particular this may occur outside of normal lesson time, e.g. break periods or during before/after school club sessions. It is therefore imperative that all members of staff, including external providers are aware of the signs and behaviour which may indicate abuse, as above and fully understand the school’s referral process.

All staff must:

* Recognise that a disclosure may come directly from the child, or from a third party, e.g. friend, neighbour, other family member. Alternatively, it may be through the suspicion of staff based on a variety of symptoms and knowledge of possible indicators of abuse
* Take seriously any disclosures made to them and provide reassurance to the discloser through their responses and behaviour.

When receiving a disclosure from a child that he/she has been abused in some way the member of staff must:

* Find time and, if necessary, a suitable place to listen to the child, when information about possible abuse comes to light.
* Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
* Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled and do not promise confidentiality. If the child asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child’s age/stage in development that you cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead you must explain that you may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child, or other children, safe.
* Allow the child to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, probe or ask to see any injury that is not visible. Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
* Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
* Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault.
* Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
* Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
* Find out just enough to be sure of the need to refer, and keep any questions open rather than closed. Education is a referrer, not an investigative agency for child protection matters. An incident may eventually end up as a court case and children's evidence can all too easily be compromised by leading questions or repeated recital.
* Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the school's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
* Sign and date the record of the disclosure.

The member of staff who has the concern or received the disclosure must report the concern/disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, immediately. The member of staff must provide the DSL with a signed, dated written record of the concern/disclosure, using the agreed school pro forma. The same approach to receiving a disclosure must be taken if the discloser is not the allegedly abused child but another child or an adult.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must place the concern on the school’s safeguarding file for the child (creating one if necessary). When the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, has been informed, he/she shall make the decision whether or not to refer the concern to Social Care.

Professionals in all agencies have a responsibility to refer a child to Children’s Social Care when it is believed or suspected that the child:

* Has suffered significant harm; or
* Is likely to suffer significant harm.

All referrals to Children’s Social Care must be made in writing using the Multi-Agency Referral Form or CAF assessment where one has been completed. A history of key events is useful when communicating concerns so that any emerging patterns are recognised.

The Referral and Assessment Service will be consulted when there is uncertainty about whether to refer. Referrals must be made as soon as possible and the appropriate forms completed and sent at the same time. Referrals to Children's Social Care must be made to the Referral and Assessment Service at:

**Bromley Children’s Social Care Contact Details**

Referral & Assessment Team Phone: 020 8461 7373 / 7379 / 7026 / 7404

London Borough of Bromley Admin: 0208 461 7309 / 7014 / 7428

Civic Centre, St Blaise E-mail: Mash@bromley.gov.uk

Stockwell Close

Bromley BR1 3UH Fax: 0208 313 4400

Emergency Duty Team (at weekends and outside normal working hours)

Phone: 020 8464 4848

The Governors and Headteacher understand that handling disclosures and making referrals can be upsetting and emotionally challenging and will ensure all staff are supported through this process

When considering any referral, staff at Valley Primary School Academy Trust refer to the ‘Actions where there are concerns about a child’ flow chart as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016).



1. **Confidentiality**

Safeguarding information should be treated as confidential and only shared as part of the agreed school and Bromley Safeguarding Children Board protocols. All staff/volunteers in school have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals. Staff / volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work shall only share that information only within appropriate contexts.

1. **Communication with Parents / Carers**

Parents and carers will be made aware of the school/service policy through published information and in initial meetings with parent and carers of new children. Parents and carers will be informed that in certain circumstances there may be a need to contact other agencies without first notifying them. This decision will be made in partnership between Education Services and Social Care Services. It will be made clear that this is a legal obligation and not a personal decision.

1. **Recording Keeping**

The completed forms/records will be kept separately from the child’s school file for the duration of the child's school career and where a child changes school the forms/records will be copied to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving school. The school will retain a receipt for the records signed by the receiving school. The information contained will be regarded as confidential. Any request for access to the information by non-Bromley Safeguarding Children Board Agencies (e.g. Solicitor, investigating agent) will be referred to the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead who is advised to seek legal advice before acting.

1. **Safer Recruitment**

The school will comply with the guidance set out in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016). At least one member of every appointments panel will have completed Safer Recruitment training.

1. **Dealing with concerns regarding school staff or volunteers**

To reduce the risk of inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour towards children, all staff and volunteers must be aware of safer working practice and must be familiar with the Government document ‘Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings’.

A concern, sometimes referred to as an allegation, is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have failed to meet the requirements set out in the staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, or may have:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she 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 with in their personal, professional or community life. These 3 points, drawn from Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016), represent the LSCB threshold for position of trust strategy meetings.

All members of staff/volunteers must report any such concerns to one of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, unless the concern relates to these members of staff (in which case they should report directly to the Headteacher). Failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The person to whom a concern or allegation is reported must take the matter seriously, keep an open mind, and must:

* Find time and, if necessary, a suitable place to listen to the person’s concerns or allegations.
* Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
* Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled and do not promise confidentiality. If the person asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the person that you cannot promise complete confidentiality.
* Allow the person to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, or probe.
* Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
* Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
* Stress that it was the right thing to share the concerns.
* Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
* Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the school's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
* Sign and date the record of the disclosure.

The member of staff must provide the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in his/her absence, his/her Deputy) with a signed, dated written record of their concerns, using the agreed school concern pro forma, without delay. The DSL or Deputy DSL receiving the concern/allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and must report the concern/allegation to the Headteacher immediately. The Headteacher will not investigate the concern itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether the concern meets any of the three criteria set out in the section above. If any of the criteria are met then the Headteacher must contact the LADO (Education) within one working day, and provide the LADO with written confirmation of the concern. The LADO for Bromley is Lorrisa Webber. The Headteacher shall, as soon as possible, following briefing from the LADO inform the subject of the concern.

If concern is raised regarding the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors will be contacted. The Chair of Governors is Bill Mitchell. In the absence of the Chair of Governors, the designated Safeguarding Governor will be contacted. This is Helen Randall.

In the event that the concern is regarding the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors or the designated Safeguarding Governor shall contact the LADO (within one working day).

**Managing referrals**

* Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care and:
* The local authority designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a member of staff)
* Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child); and/or
* Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).
* Liaise with the Principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
* Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

**Training**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order to:

* Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
* Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
* Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s or college’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff
* Be alert to the specific needs of children in need7, those with special educational needs and young carers
* Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
* Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training
* Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them

**Raising Awareness**

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Leads should ensure:

* the school’s policies are known and used appropriately
* Ensure the school’s Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly and work with the Governing Body regarding this
* Ensure the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made by the school
* Liaise with the LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
* Where children leave the school, ensure their child protection file is copied for any new school as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Appendix 1: Cause for Concern Form

|  |
| --- |
| **C:\Users\stephen jackson\Documents\Academic Year 2015-16\Academic Year 2014-15\Logo (Small).jpgValley Primary School Cause for Concern Form** |
| Pupil’s Name: Clas: |
| Details of Concern: |
| Reported By:  Date: |
| **Cause for Concern REPLY SLIP**Pupil’s name: Class:Action Taken:* Continue to review and report any other concerns
* Communicate your concern to Child’s parent
* Designated Safeguarding Lead taking action

Signed: Date:Print Name: |