

Choose To Live – Safeguarding policy

Date written: 26th November 2017

Review date: 26th November 2018



1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR POLICY

In line with the Government's vision for all services for children and young people, Choose To Live recognise that children have a fundamental right to learn in a safe environment and to be protected from harm. Young people are less likely to learn effectively and go on to lead positive and independent lives if they are not kept healthy and safe. Choose To Live is therefore committed to providing an environment which is safe and where the welfare of each child is of paramount importance. This will include a commitment to ensuring that all young people feel confident that any concerns they may have will be listened to and acted upon.

This Safeguarding Policy applies to all, trustees, staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, pupils and anybody working on behalf of Choose To Live.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

- To raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding and child protection, and in particular to make clear responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse;
- To ensure all end users of our services are aware that Choose To Live takes child protection seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and for dealing with allegations against staff;
- To promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together for the protection and welfare of all young people;
- To support young peoples' development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence;
- To make appropriate links and reference to policies in related areas

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- Department for Education Statutory Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2015
- Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013
- London Child Protection Procedures 2013
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INTERVENTION TO PROTECT CHILDREN

We will ensure that the principles identified below, many of which derive from the Children's Act 1989, are followed by all staff and anybody working on behalf of Choose To Live.

- All children have a right to be kept safe and protected from abuse;
- Child abuse can occur in all cultures, religions and social classes; Staff must be sensitive to the families cultural and social background;
- Children must have the opportunity to express their views and be heard If there is a conflict of interests between the child and parent, the interests of the child must be paramount;
- The responsibility to initiate agreed procedures rests with the senior staff identified for safeguarding in which ever school or establishment we are working in;
- All staff must endeavour to work in partnership with those who hold parental responsibility for a child
- Information in the context of a child protection enquiry must be treated as CONFIDENTIAL and only shared with those who need to know.
- All staff should have access to appropriate and regular training
- Management must allow staff sufficient time to carry out their duties in relation to child protection and safeguarding

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEAD/DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PROFESSIONAL

The Senior Staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection is: Joelle Gardiner

Management will ensure that the school has identified a Designated Safeguarding Professional for child protection and that the Head/Designated Safeguarding Professional undertakes the following responsibilities:

- To ensure all staff are familiar with school and Borough procedures and guidelines for identifying and reporting abuse, including allegations of abuse against staff;
- To ensure all staff receive training in the above, including staff who are temporary;
- To be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with school/establishment staff and support services over child protection issues;
- To be aware of all young people in receipt of our services who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan or who are Looked After Children and ensure the child's social worker is informed if such children are the subject of an exclusion from the school;
- To ensure that Choose To Live is represented at child protection case conferences and that written reports are provided as required;
- To follow as appropriate recommendations made by Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- To be aware of new legislation, guidance, policy and procedures in the area of Safeguarding and Child protection.
- To support and advise staff on child protection issues generally. To disseminate relevant information between agencies to the appropriate staff e.g. relevant school teachers, support staff, learning mentors

- To maintain accurate and secure child protection records and send on to new schools (where relevant)

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

a) All staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well-being of the young people they are working with. In doing so they should seek advice and support as necessary from the Head/Designated Safeguarding Professional and other senior staff members.

b) Staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which young people can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Young people should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behaviour.

c) All staff are expected to:

- Be able to identify signs and symptoms of abuse
- Report concerns (including concerns about other staff/professionals) to the Designated Safeguarding Professional or other senior staff members as appropriate
- Be aware of the relevant local procedures and guidelines
- Monitor and report as required on the welfare, attendance and progress of the young people they are working with
- Keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures from children and young people (stay calm, reassure without making unrealistic promises, listen, avoid leading questions, avoid being judgemental and keep records).

6. APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

Choose To Live management is committed to adhering to the principle of safer recruitment when appointing staff, taking account of the Department for Education Statutory Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015' and will observe the following safeguards:

- That documentation sent out to potential candidates will make it clear that safeguarding and child protection is a high priority of the school and that rigorous checks will be made of any candidate before appointments are confirmed;
- That all references will be taken up and verified by telephoning referees;
- That a reference will always be obtained from the last employer;
- At interview, all candidates will be asked to account for any gaps in their career/employment history;
- That candidates will be made aware that all staff are subject to an enhanced DBS check
- That evidence of relevant checks will be recorded and stored in a single, central location, easily accessible when appropriate and necessary.

7. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

- a. Trustees recognise that because of their daily contact with children in a variety of situations, including the caring role, Choose To Live staff are vulnerable to accusations of abuse.
- b. The Trustees further recognise that, regrettably, in some cases such accusations may be true. The trustees, therefore, expect all staff to follow the agreed procedures for dealing with allegations against staff as laid out in the document Dealing with allegations of abuse against staff: Statutory guidance for local authorities, headteachers, school staff, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools.

8. STAFF CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

As adults in positions of trust and in order to minimise the risk of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with pupils, all school staff will adhere to Choose To Live's expectations regarding professional conduct and should familiarise themselves with the DfE Guidance regarding reasonable force.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

9. STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- a. Trustees recognise the importance of child protection training for Designated Safeguarding Professionals and for all other school staff who have contact with children. The designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection will have specific training in their role.
- b. Trustees expect the Head/Designated Safeguarding Professional to ensure that all school staff, including support and ancillary staff, receive training in child protection and that new staff are made aware of school policy, procedures and guidelines when they join and receive annual training thereafter in line with best practice.
- c. Management is also expected to ensure that all staff receive regular support in respect of child protection work and know which senior member of staff to refer to for advice in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Professional.
- d. Trustees recognises its own responsibilities to ensure Choose To Live has sufficient resources to effectively deliver its safeguarding responsibilities to the highest standard and to request information as part of the managers' report regarding the safeguarding practice of the organisation so any identified gaps are remedied in a timely way.

10. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Trustees recognise that children with special educational needs may be especially vulnerable to abuse and expect staff to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. Indications of abuse will be reported as for all young people. The Designated Safeguarding Professional will identify pupils with communication needs and to ensure clear guidance is available for staff in relation to their responsibilities when working with children with intimate care needs.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

Trustees accept that child protection raises issues of confidentiality, which should be clearly understood by all staff. Reports to the Trustees will not identify individual children.

12. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTS

- a. Trustees expect all staff to maintain high quality signed and dated child protection records, which separate fact, allegation, hearsay and opinion and which clearly indicate decisions and action taken. These records may in some cases be required in court proceedings.
- b. Trustees further expect staff to assist the Family and Children's Services Department by providing information for child protection case conferences as required.

13. MONITORING PUPILS ON THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

Trustees expect the manager to ensure that staff monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of all pupils. Relevant and pertinent information relating to children either subject to a Child Protection Plan or deemed Children in Need will be provided in a timely fashion to Family and Children's Services staff.

14. COMMUNICATING POLICY TO PARENTS AND PUPILS

- a. The trustees expect parents and young people to be informed that Choose To Live has a child protection policy and is required to follow the LSCB Guidelines for reporting suspected abuse to the Family and Children's Services Department.
- b. Young people and parents should know how Choose To Live's child protection system works and with whom they can discuss any concerns. They should also be made aware of local or national telephone help lines. A leaflet, facilitating this communication and produced by the Local Authority, is available.

15. MONITORING AND EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL'S POLICY.

The Trustees require the Manager to report to them annually on the effectiveness of the organisations child protection policy and on associated issues in the school over the preceding year.

16. CHILD PROTECTION IN RELATION TO OTHER POLICIES

This child protection policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies such as behaviour, use of restraint and equality policies.

The trustees and staff appreciate the depth and range of procedures which fall under the broad 'umbrella' of safeguarding and therefore expect all trustees and staff at Choose To Live to ensure that they apply the principles of safeguarding in all their actions in connection with the organisation and stakeholders.

Signed:

26th July 2017

Joelle Gardiner (Head of Safeguarding)