

## **RUTHERFORD SCHOOL**

### **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

*A copy of this policy is available from the school office, or alternatively on our website*

*[www.rutherfordschool.org.uk](http://www.rutherfordschool.org.uk)*

#### **Key Personnel**

**Jean Simpson – Designated Safeguarding Lead**  
(Ladybird class teacher Ext 228)

**Jo Watts – Designated Safeguarding Deputy**  
(Lifeskills center teacher Ext 229)

**Or speak to Head of School/Senior Manager**

#### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

Safeguarding means to proactively seek to involve the whole organisation in keeping pupils and other young people safe and promoting their welfare. Child and adult protection is a central part of safeguarding and promoting welfare; it is the process of protecting individuals identified as either suffering- or being at risk of suffering- significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. (Children Act 1989 – s47)

All people have the potential for abusing and this occurs in all races, cultures and social classes. It is important to consider that someone who abuses a child or young person could be a member of their immediate or extended family, a friend, a neighbour, a stranger, a member of staff, a carer or a fellow peer. It is therefore essential that staff remain professional and non-judgemental when issues arise.

Rutherford School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of its pupils. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and students on work experience placements, visiting professionals, school governors and Garwood Foundation trustees working in the school. Parents and essential care givers are made aware of the policy. We follow stringent recruitment practices. This enables us to provide a safe environment in which poor performance and unsafe practices are challenged.

Rutherford School recognises that all staff, school governors and nominated trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the pupils' wellbeing is of over-riding importance. We believe that our school provides a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment which promotes the physiological, psychological and spiritual development of the individual pupil.

Rutherford School recognises its duty of care under the Education Act 2011, Section 175, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Children Acts 2004, Working together to Safeguard Children 2018, Keeping Children safe in Education 2019, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Using these acts for guidance, the school ensures that functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. The procedures contained within this policy ensure that the appropriate action is taken

immediately where there is any allegation of abuse, or if there are any concerns about the treatment of a pupil by a member of staff, another pupil, a family member or a carer.

Rutherford school is aware that as our pupils reach 18, they become vulnerable adults, and therefore will continue to require safeguarding measures. The school is aware of the need to safeguard vulnerable adults, be they pupils or staff, and are aware of the extra categories of abuse to which they may be vulnerable.

## **2. OVERALL PROCEDURES**

### **2.1 GENERAL**

- a) The Rutherford school safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually (or more frequently if necessary changes are identified) by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) in conjunction with the School Management Team (SMT), and ratified by the School governors and trustees.
- b) All Rutherford School staff are required to read and sign the Safeguarding policy. This is also part of the induction procedure for new staff. Whenever the policy is updated, the Designated Safeguarding officers will be responsible for ensuring that all staff are made aware of any changes.
- c) All staff and volunteers, will be provided with annual mandatory training or refresher training.
- d) Visiting professionals will be required to bring photographic ID and a copy of their latest DBS certificate. These will be copied and kept in the school office.
- e) Visiting contractors will be encouraged to come to the school when pupils are not present. If this is not possible, they will be supervised by a member of staff at all times.
- f) To ensure confidentiality, relevant information regarding abuse, or suspected abuse, will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- g) There is a filing cabinet in the office containing files for all pupils for whom there have been any safeguarding concerns, even if these have subsequently been found not to be substantiated. This filing cabinet can only be access by the Designated Safeguarding Leads or the Head of School. The DSL's are responsible for ensuring that this procedure is followed.
- h) If a pupil has a safeguarding file, there is a red dot on the front of his/her education file in the school office.
- i) All pupil medical and safeguarding notes **must** be kept until they are at least 25 years old.
- j) If there are any concerns or allegations made about a member of staff, whether or not these are substantiated, a second file with details of this will be kept in the Head of School's office. A red dot will be placed on that member of staff's personnel file to indicate that there is a safeguarding file for that member of staff.

### **2.2 RECORD KEEPING**

When writing any documents that may form part of a safeguarding enquiry, it is essential that the writing is:

- Accurate and factual
- Objective and non-judgemental
- Concise and clear
- Immediate
- Dated
- Signed

- Kept Private and Confidential

### **2.3 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Disclosed information, or suspected signs of abuse, must not be discussed with any other member of staff unless specifically needed for liaison and safeguarding purposes – this will be decided by one of the DSO's or a senior manager. All information gathered for safeguarding is treated as confidential and kept secure, as at 2.1 (g) above.

Sensitive information about a pupil may need to be shared both inside and outside the organisation in specific circumstances. Research has shown repeatedly that keeping pupils and young people safe from harm requires professionals to share information about defined aspects of their life to keep them from harm. Often, it is only when information is shared that it becomes clear that a pupil may be being harmed. Concerning internal information sharing, confidentiality is not to be confused with secrecy, which undermines the appropriate sharing of information. Concerning external information sharing, Rutherford School is aware of its duty to share information as needed with external agencies during safeguarding investigations.

The school seeks written consent from parents and carers for school staff to seek and share information from other professionals as required in order to improve the standard of care given. Where this is refused by the parent, the decision will be respected **unless there are any safeguarding concerns. In the event of any safeguarding concerns, the need to protect the pupil from harm overrides the wishes of the parent or carer.**

### **2.4 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF**

There is careful selection and vetting of all staff (including supply, bank and agency staff and volunteers) and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent pupils from being exposed to potential abuse.

The following practices **must** be followed:

- a) Checks must be carried out on all members of staff (as above) to ensure that they have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and to verify the authenticity of identity documents and professional qualifications. The resulting information must be stored on the school's single central register.
- b) The school must confirm identity through original documents to ensure authenticity.
- c) A full employment history for prospective staff members must be sought. Rutherford School reserves the right to approach any previous employers or overseas authorities where DBS checks do not suffice.
- d) All new employees who work with pupils must be subject to a closely monitored, supervised probationary period. Rutherford School has the right of termination of contract if the health, safety and wellbeing of any pupils becomes compromised. If this situation were to arise, there is a statutory responsibility for the school to inform the DBS.
- e) The single central register is maintained on a day to day basis by HR, however, it is the responsibility of the DSL's, the Head of School and the school governor with safeguarding responsibility to ensure that this is done. See appendix 3 for more details

### **3. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND WHISTLEBLOWING**

Rutherford School is aware and follows the London Safeguarding Pupils Board Pupil Protection procedure and Croydon Safeguarding Pupils Board guidance regarding allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer. The Head of School and DSL will be informed immediately and decide on an appropriate course of action. If the allegation concerns the Head of School, the Director of Services will deal with the allegation. If staff have concerns about the DSL or the deputy DSL, they should report this to the Head of School.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **must** be informed of any allegations made against any staff at Rutherford School. Telephone number 0208 726 8432  
Email [LADO@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@croydon.gov.uk). The current LADO is Steve Hall.

Rutherford School also has a whistleblowing policy, which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

#### **3.1 Guidelines for the protection of staff**

- a) Staff and volunteers must use work practices that will reduce or eliminate any possible risk of allegation of abuse by the family, carer or pupil.
- b) No mobile phones or personal photography digital equipment is to be accessed by staff in the vicinity of pupils.
- c) Intimate care is required by all the pupils at Rutherford School. Please refer to section 4 for guidance.

### **4. GUIDELINES FOR DELIVERING INTIMATE CARE**

Rutherford School acknowledges that all pupils have the right to privacy, dignity and choice. Due to the ratio of male to female staff, it is however not always possible for pupils to be offered the choice of a carer of the same sex.

#### **4.1 Protocol for Intimate Medical Examination and Medication Administration**

- a) All intimate medical examinations will be carried out by the School's community Paediatric consultant.
- b) Intimate examinations will only be carried out with the consent of, and in the presence of the parent or carer and a registered nurse.
- c) Every attempt will be made to ensure the pupil's dignity, safety and comfort during the examination.
- d) The examination will be documented, dated and signed in the nursing notes.
- e) If rectal medication is required, this will be given by a registered nurse, or a member of the nursing team who has received training in medication administration. A second member of the nursing team, or a member of the classroom staff will be present at the same time.
- f) Throughout the procedure, the pupil's privacy and dignity will be preserved.

#### **4.2 Principles for providing intimate care**

- a) The pupil must always be treated with dignity and respect. It is important to communicate with the pupil at all times, explaining what is going to happen, particularly when touching intimate areas.
- b) Privacy must be maintained at all times; anyone wishing to enter a pupil bathroom **must** knock before entering, and wait until invited to enter by the staff dealing with the pupil.
- c) School policies and procedures must be followed at all times.
- d) There must always be 2 staff members in the bathroom providing intimate care.
- e) Intimate care must **only** be carried out by classroom staff (including teachers) or nursing staff.
- f) Male and female staff have the right not to place themselves in a vulnerable situation where actions could be misinterpreted.
- g) New staff will only be allowed to provide intimate care after they have received safeguarding and manual handling training and have reached the appropriate stage in their induction and the school has received their DBS clearance.

#### **5. CONTACT WITH PUPILS**

##### **5.1 Physical Contact**

The following guidelines are designed to ensure that contact between staff and pupils is not misinterpreted.

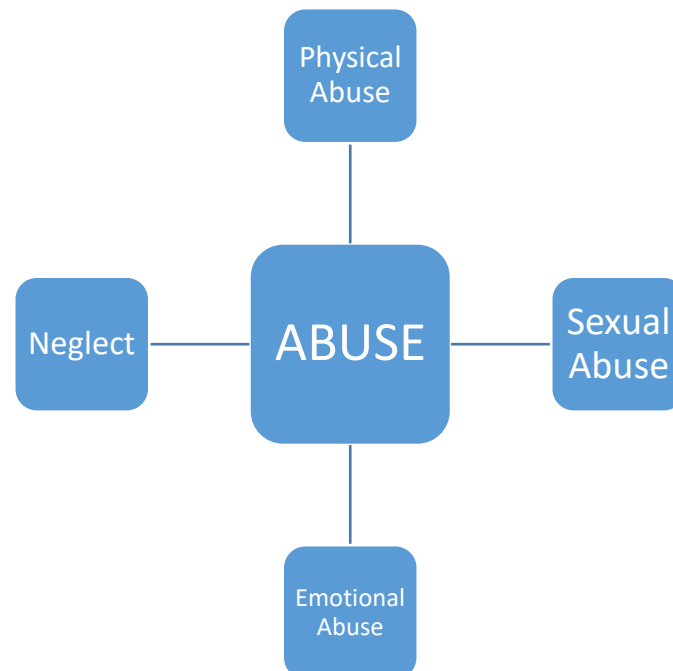
- a) The pupil's rights to privacy and dignity are recognised.
- b) Appropriate communication must be used in accordance with each pupil's individual need before and throughout contact.
- c) Touch cues and verbal prompting are used before and during any contact.
- d) Pupil's resistance is respected and managed.
- e) Staff must be vigilant and recognise any untoward physical, emotional and behavioural indicators which are monitored and recorded when appropriate.

##### **5.2 Contact Alone with Pupils**

Occasionally pupils may require 1:1 contact for treatment, therapy or sessions. These sessions should be kept to a minimum, and the following guidelines followed:

- a) Staff undergoing their probationary period should never be left alone with pupils until the end of their probationary period or they have been deemed competent, by their line manager
- b) Routine 1:1 time should be timetabled e.g. Sensory Room, ICT and Music Therapy.
- c) Occasional 1:1 – another member of staff, preferably the teacher must be informed prior to undertaking 1:1.
- d) Irrespective of gender, staff must be able to exercise the right not to be placed in vulnerable situations where their actions could be misconstrued.
- e) 1:1 time should be documented including activities undertaken.
- f) The lone working policy should be followed at all times.

6. **CATEGORIES OF ABUSE (As defined by HM Government (2013) Working together to Safeguard Children)**



6.1 **Categories of Concern**

a) **Physical Abuse**

Deliberate or intended injury to a child e.g.

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, poisoning, deliberate medication overdose.
- Deliberate inducement of an illness.
- Adult non-compliance of prescribed medication (PMLD pupils are totally dependent on their care givers)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

b) **Neglect**

The persistent or severe neglect of a pupil's physical and/or psychological needs, which results in significant impairment of the child's health and wellbeing and impacts on the pupil's growth and development. Possible failure to thrive for non-medical reasons.

- Failure to:
  - Provide adequate food, shelter (including abandonment)
  - Provide clothing appropriate to the weather conditions.
  - Protect from physical harm or danger.
  - Provide basic emotional needs.

- Ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure a safe environment.
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care.

**c) Sexual Abuse**

Actual or likely sexual exploitation e.g.

- Use of force or enticement to take part in sexual activity, either penetrative (e.g .rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative ( these include prostitution, whether or not the pupil is aware of what is happening)
- Involvement in non-contact activities, such as looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or abusive images.
- Allowing pupils to watch sexual activities.
- Any sexual activity with a PMLD pupil of any age.
- Female Genital Mutilation

**d) Emotional Abuse**

Persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection which adversely affects the pupil's emotional and behavioural development e.g.

- Use of repeated language to make a pupil feel worthless, unloved, inadequate and undervalued.
- Overprotection, limiting exploration and developing full learning potential, preventing social interaction or imposing inappropriate expectations.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on pupils.
- Causing a child to feel frightened, anxious, threatened or in danger by the witnessing of violence towards another person (adult or child), or ill-treatment of others.
- Bullying

**6.2 Recognition of possible abuse**

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with pupils, school staff are well placed to observe a significant change in a pupil's behaviour even though it is often extremely difficult to determine if abuse has occurred.

School staff should be aware that pupils may exhibit any of the following **with or without** abuse having occurred, for example:

**a) Verbal Communication** (most likely from parents or carers)

- Explanation inconsistent with injury.
- Several different explanations for injury
- Reluctance to give information about an injury.

**b) Non-Verbal Signs**

- Non accidental injury, bruising or marks.
- A sudden change in behaviour – aggression, introversion, extroversion, becomes withdrawn, depression.
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Untreated health/dental issues
- Recurrent/untreated infections of the skins (particularly genital and anal area), oral cavity, or head lice.

- Fearful when adult approaches.
- Frequent absence from school or repeated lateness.

NB: This list is not exhaustive.

### **6.3 Vulnerable Adults**

As stated in the introduction, vulnerable adults are also prone to abuse in all the above categories, and also:

- Domestic abuse

This is typically an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member.

- Discriminatory abuse

This includes some forms of harassment, slurs or similar unfair treatment relating to race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

- Financial abuse

This could be someone stealing money or other valuables from you, or it might be someone who is appointed to look after your money on your behalf using the money inappropriately or coercing you into spending it in a way you are not happy with. Internet scams and doorstep crime are also common forms of financial abuse.

(taken from NHS Choices website)

## **7. SUPPORT TO PUPILS**

We recognise that pupils, including those who are abused or witness violence, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation, and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of pupils at risk. Any behaviour out of the normal context for the specific pupil should be noted e.g. the pupil may be challenging or they may be withdrawn. The school endeavours to support the pupil through;

- The content of the sensory and developmental curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, pupils and adolescent mental health service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that when a pupil on the child protection register leaves, this information is relayed to the new school immediately in writing and copied to the pupil's social worker. Those with parental responsibility would be informed of the transfer of information.

## **8. CONFIDENTIALITY**

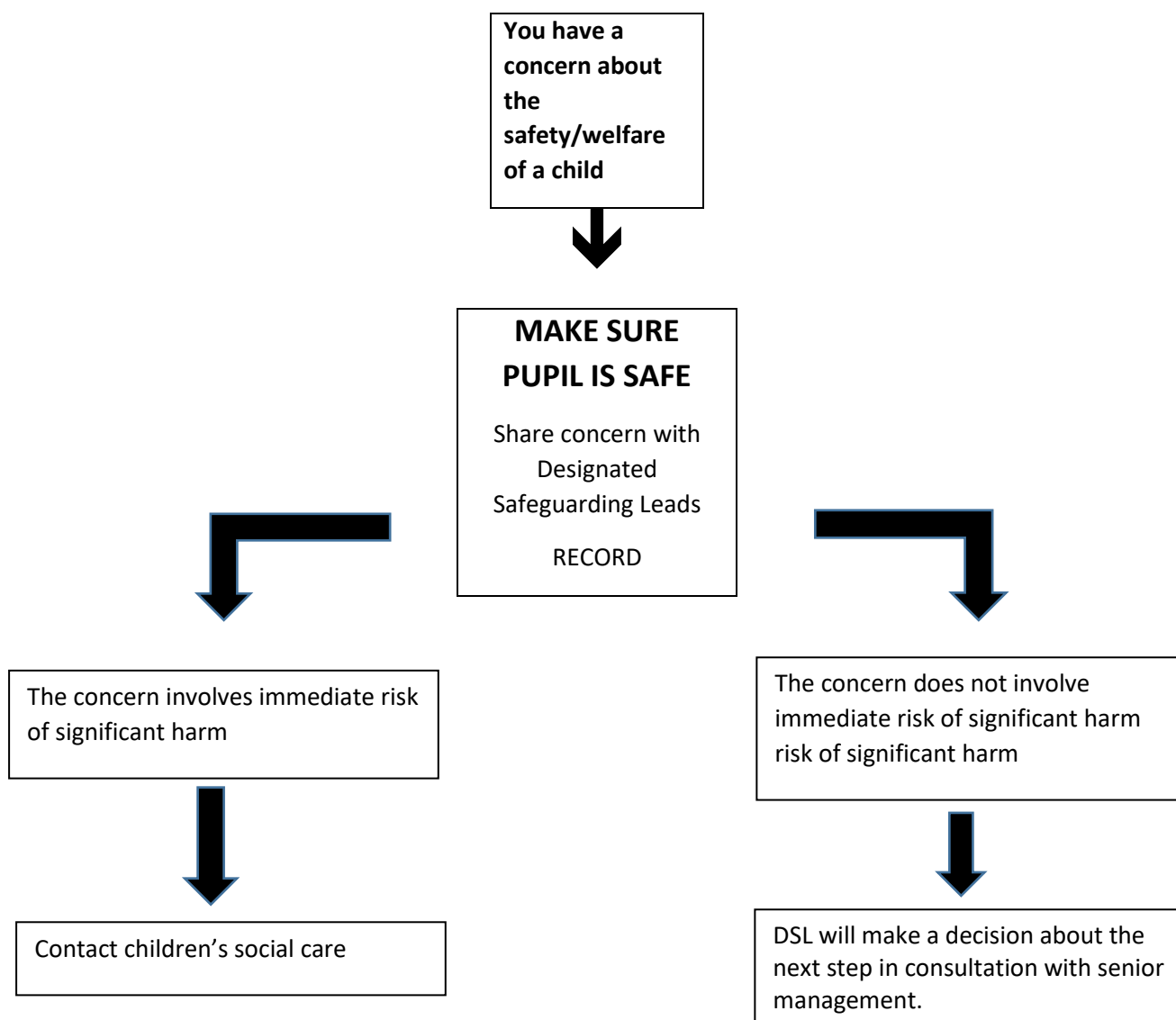


- We recognise that all matters relating to pupil protection are strictly confidential.
- The Head of School or DSL's will disclose personal information about a pupil to other member of staff on a need to know basis only.
- Everyone must be aware that staff cannot promise anyone concerned including the pupil, member of staff, family or carer that they will keep secrets or confidence. This might compromise the pupil's safety, health and well-being.
- The school will always undertake to share our intention to refer a pupil to social services with their parents/carers permission unless to do so could put the pupil at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.
- The more sensitive the information, the greater the child-focussed need must be to justify disclosure. However, there is a greater need to ensure that only those professionals who have to be informed receive the information.
- With regards to confidentiality in relation to Child Protection Procedures:
  - The DSL or Deputy DSL is obliged to pass on information.
  - There is no guarantee that the source of a referral can be kept confidential.

## 9 PROCEDURES FOR STAFF WHO SUSPECT POSSIBLE ABUSE TO A PUPIL

If a member of staff notices anything about a child that causes concern, the flowchart should be followed.

### Rutherford School Safeguarding Procedure Flowchart



Staff who makes referrals concerning a child will be informed and kept updated with the progress of the investigation.

### **8.1 Safeguarding Procedure following concern or disclosure.**

If urgent, MASH referral done immediately

**To make a referral**

**0208 726 6464**

**Or online at [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk) → concerned about a Croydon child**

If unsure, call Consultation line on

**0208 726 6464 and follow their advice**

Document all activity and communication in pupil's safeguarding file.

Inform Senior Manager

Inform Parent/Carer if appropriate

[www.sutton.gov.uk](http://www.sutton.gov.uk) 020 8770 6001

[www.bromleysafeguarding.org](http://www.bromleysafeguarding.org) 020 8461 7309

[www.safeguardinglewisham.org.uk](http://www.safeguardinglewisham.org.uk) 020 8314 3396

[saferchildren@lambeth.co.uk](mailto:saferchildren@lambeth.co.uk) 020 7926 5555

MASH team [mash@merton.gov.uk](mailto:mash@merton.gov.uk) 0208545 4226/7

**Appendix 1; PREVENT STRATEGY**

This appendix is written with reference to the Prevent Strategy document published by HM Government in June 2011.

- The staff at Rutherford School fully support the aim and ideals of the Prevent Strategy and will seek to ensure that any guidelines are followed.
- While it is unlikely that any of our pupils would be directly radicalised, it is possible that this could happen to their siblings or parents, so there would be an indirect effect on the pupil.
- Due to our close working relationships with our parents and families, the staff at Rutherford school are ideally placed to notice if there seems to be any change in parents' beliefs and behaviours.
- It would be difficult but not impossible for our pupils to be taken out of the country for a prolonged period of time without co-operation from healthcare professionals. However, it is possible that to avoid detection, parents would seek to do this; in this scenario, our pupils would also be at risk of their health needs not being met, particularly if the country to which they are travelling does not have such an advanced healthcare system as our own.

### **Actions**

- Regular staff/parent liaison will continue, through formal means such as school reviews and clinics, and through informal means such as coffee morning, school productions etc.
- If at any time a member of staff senses that a parent or sibling is becoming radicalised, this must be mentioned to the safeguarding officers.
- The safeguarding officer will speak to the social services safeguarding department of the relevant local authority for advice.
- The safeguarding officers, Senior Leadership Team and all class teachers will attend regular training about Prevent procedures.

### **Appendix 2: FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**

- As mentioned in section 6.1/2 FGM is a form of both physical and sexual abuse. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of abuse that has long lasting harmful consequences.
- Section 5B of the FGM Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals, to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.
- Teachers MUST personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the schools designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.
- The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases. In these cases, teachers should follow school safeguarding procedures.

### **Appendix 3: DBS Policy**

All staff who work at the school, whether in a voluntary or paid capacity, will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This is organised by HR. The registered body who does these checks for the school is Penrose Medicare

#### **New Staff**

A DBS check will be initiated as soon as the member of staff has started work at the school. If the staff member already has a DBS check from previous recent employment of a similar type, this will be accepted in the interim so long as it is an enhanced check and states 'child workforce', unless they have subscribed to the DBS update service (see below)

Prior to formally offering the position to a candidate, the school may choose to check whether the candidate is on the 'list 99' barred list from working with children and vulnerable adults.

If the staff member does not already have a DBS check they will be allowed to work but will be closely supervised at all times and NEVER left alone with a pupil, or provide intimate care.

#### **Existing Staff**

DBS checks are re-done every 3 years. This is a timespan agreed by the school, and can be changed at any time. The new check is applied for a month before the 3 years is completed. However, the staff member can continue to work while waiting for their new check to come through.

All staff are reminded that they have a legal responsibility to inform the school if they have had any criminal convictions which may render them unsuitable to work with children.

Staff are required to show their DBS certificate to HR on receipt of this. The school does NOT keep a copy of this certificate, but the single central register has a record of the number of the certificate and the expiry date. In addition, there is a sheet in each member of staff's file in the office with the number and date of the DBS certificate for quick reference. (copy attached)

#### **DBS Checks**

If the DBS highlights a previous conviction, this does not necessarily mean that they cannot work. The Designated Safeguarding Leads will review this, in discussion with SMT. If required, advice can also be taken from the Local Authority Designated Officer.

#### **DBS Single Central Register**

The single central register, containing all information required by HM Government is held electronically in the school office and managed by HR and it is updated regularly. It can be accessed on a need to know basis by office staff, head of school, senior management team members, designated safeguarding leads or safeguarding governor.

#### **Update service**

If a member of staff has voluntarily signed up for the DBS update service (currently this costs £13 annually), they can take their DBS with them from job to job, so long as it states child workforce.

There is no requirement on staff at Rutherford school to do this, and the school does not pay for the service.

**Visitors/contractors to school**

Regular visitors and contractors will be asked to provide evidence of a satisfactory DBS check on their first visit, and a note will be made by the administrative assistant. Alternatively, before their arrival this information can be obtained from their company.

On – off visitors and contractors will be supervised at all times when in the building.

## DISCLOSURE DBS

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Position:</b>
<b>Document No:</b>
<b>Date of Document:</b>
<b>Clear:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>no</b>

I can confirm I have / have not seen the original enhanced DBS document.

Name.....

Signature.....

Position.....

Date.....

#### **Appendix 4: Protocol for the start and the end of the day when pupils arrive and leave**

It is acknowledged that the time when the pupils arrive and leave is the most vulnerable time for the school in terms of safeguarding due to the fact that the pupil entrance is separate to the main entrance and therefore not subject to the same level of control.

However, the following points will be adhered to in order to minimise the risks;

- The gate leading to the pupil entrance, and the pupil entrance itself will only be open from 8.45 – 9.15 and from 15.00 – 15.30. Outside of these times, all entry is via the school office.
- While the gate is open and the door on automatic opening, the caretaker will be in the vicinity to ensure there is no unauthorised entry.
- All drivers and passenger assistants should be wearing official ID from their transport provider. This will be checked regularly by the safeguarding leads in school.
- If an un-familiar driver or passenger assistant arrives to collect a pupil, they will be asked to show their ID before being allowed to collect the pupil. If there is any discrepancy, the transport provider will be contacted.
- If a pupil is normally collected by a parent, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the class teacher if a different person will be collecting their child. If this does not happen, the school reserves the right to call the parent for clarification before allowing the pupil to go home.
- When parents are collecting or dropping off their pupils, other staff will be mindful of confidentiality when discussing other pupils in the class.
- Any pupil who travels on transport will have a Healthcare Passport in their school bag, which gives details of their medical condition and medications in the event that emergency services are required.
- Passenger assistants will be informed of how the pupil has been in school on a 'need to know' basis. For example, they may be told if the pupil has had a lot of seizure activity so that they can look out for this on the journey home.
- If the passenger assistant needs to hand over information from home, or the school nurses or class staff need to hand over information from school, this will be done being mindful of other pupils, parents and transport staff in the area. If necessary, they will be taken to a private area for the discussion.

## **Appendix 5: Peer on Peer abuse**

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016 states that '*Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with*'

Peer on Peer abuse is unlikely to occur within our school setting due to the complex needs of our pupils however all staff need to be mindful that it may occur in the future as our cohort of pupils may change and the policy will be updated to reflect this as and when required.

We are committed to ensure that any form of peer on peer abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently. This will reduce the extent of harm to the young person and minimise the potential impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation, etc. This is a matter of professional judgement.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- there are concerns about the intention of the alleged young person.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

**Jean Simpson Designated Safeguarding Lead**

**Jo Watts Deputy Safeguarding Lead**

**Updated April 2020**



