

The Priory Primary Academy Trust

# Safeguarding Policy

Including Child Protection

January 2012

Reviewed annually by the governing body



## Introduction

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 gives maintained schools a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, and have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education – DfES 2007*).

The Priory Primary Academy Trust recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, and protect them from harm, and respond to child abuse.

We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged.

We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our teaching and learning, extra curricular activities, pastoral care and extended school activities. In order to achieve this, all members of staff (including volunteers and governors) in this school, in whatever capacity, will at all times act proactively in child welfare matters especially where there is a possibility that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

The School seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The School hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot promise secrecy if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

In the Academy, if we have suspicions that a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being is being, or is likely to be, harmed, or that they are being neglected, we will take appropriate action.

As a consequence, we assert that teachers and other members of staff (including volunteers) in the Academy are an integral part of the child safeguarding process and:

- accept totally that safeguarding children is an appropriate function for all members of staff in the School, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities
- recognise that safeguarding children in this school is a responsibility for all staff, including volunteers, and the Governing body
- will ensure through training and supervision that all staff and volunteers in the School are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and know how to report concerns or suspicions
- will designate a senior member of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns. He or she will act as a source of expertise and advice, and is responsible for co-ordinating action within the School and liaising with other agencies
- ensure (through the designated member of staff) that staff with designated responsibility for child protection will receive appropriate training
- will share our concerns with others who need to know, and assist in any referral process

- will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers who have suspicion that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, refer such concerns to the designated member of staff, who will refer on to Children's Services
- safeguard the welfare of children whilst in the School, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, disability or special educational needs
- will ensure that all staff are aware of the child protection procedures established by the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees that all people who work in our school are suitable to work with children
- will act swiftly and make appropriate referrals where an allegation is made that a member of staff has committed an offence against a child, harmed a child, or acted in a way that calls into question their suitability for working with children.

### Designated Member of Staff

The designated senior member of staff ("designated person") for child protection in the Priory Primary Academy is Mrs Suzanne Kelly; in her absence, these matters will be dealt with by Mrs Shirley Lewis.

The designated person is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

The designated person is the first person to whom members of staff report concerns and is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.

The designated person is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff.

The Academy recognises that:

- the designated person need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the Academy management structure to carry out the duties of the post – they must therefore be a senior member of staff in the School
- all members of staff (including volunteers) must be made aware of who this person is and what their role is.

The designated person will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within the Academy over child protection cases.

The designated person will need to liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies. They should possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns. Appropriate training and support should be given.

To be effective they will:

- act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the School and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Services and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm
- cascade safeguarding advice and guidance
- ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the Academy, and regular visitors (such as Education Welfare Officers, **Connexions personal advisors**, trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can access readily, this policy

- ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated governor for child protection regarding this
- be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place
- ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the School may need to make referral (raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the School does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child)
- where children leave the School roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, separately from the main file, and addressed to the designated person for child protection
- where a child leaves and the new school is not known, ensure that the local authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing pupils.

The designated person also has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. They should:

- attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case
- have a working knowledge of child protection case conferences and be able to attend and contribute to these when required
- attend any relevant or refresher training courses and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and governors.
- make themselves (and any deputies) known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in child protection. This should be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the designated teacher immediately.

### **Designated Governor**

The governing body will appoint a designated Governor for Child Protection at the School.

Child protection is important. Where appropriate, the Governors will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

The Governors will ensure that the designated member of staff for child protection is given sufficient time to carry out his or her duties, including accessing training.

The Governors will review safeguarding practices in the Academy on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:

- The School is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the Academy
- Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practices in this matter, and that staff receive training where appropriate
- Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers
- The Academy follows the procedures and guidance issued by the Local Authority
- only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the Academy, or work there in a voluntary capacity
- where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are substantiated, take appropriate disciplinary action.

## **Recruitment**

In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at the Academy, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

We accept that it is our responsibility to follow the guidance set out in “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education”, in particular:

- before appointing someone, follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicant’s suitability to work with vulnerable children
- check that all adults with substantial access to children at this school have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check before starting work, and prior to confirmation of appointment.

In addition, we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the School:

- identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be
- academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
- professional and character references prior to offering employment
- satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
- previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.

## **Volunteers**

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the School, in whatever capacity, will be given the same consideration as paid staff.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, s/he will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

## **Induction and training**

All new members of staff will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.

All new staff at the School (including volunteers) will receive basic child protection information (“What To Do If You Suspect A Child Is Being Abused”) and a copy of this policy within one week of starting their work at the School.

All staff will be expected to attend training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The School will provide this training as through the designated person.

Staff will attend refresher training every three years, and the designated person every two years.

## **Dealing with concerns**

Members of staff and volunteers are not required by this school to investigate suspicions; if somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they must always refer such concerns to the designated person, who will refer the matter to the relevant Children's Services.

To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below upon the receipt of any information from:

- a child
- any person has suspicions that a child may be at risk of harm
- anyone observing injuries that appear to be non-accidental
- a child or young person making a direct allegation or implies that they have been abused or makes an allegation against a member of staff

they must record what they have seen, heard or know accurately at the time the event occurs, and share their concerns with the designated person (or head teacher if an allegation about a member of staff) and agree action to take.

We will ensure that all members of staff and employees are familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents.

Where any member of staff fails to report their concerns, this may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

### **Safeguarding in the Academy**

As well as ensuring that we address child protection concerns, we will also ensure that children who attend the School are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.

To this end, this policy must be seen in light of the Academy's specific policies or position in respect of:

- Personal, Social and Health Education and Sex and Relationships Education - child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate
- Bullying - the Academy will also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, or bullying that is homophobic in nature, or where there appear to be links to domestic abuse in the family home
- Safe recruitment and code of conduct for staff
- Racist incidents
- Confidentiality
- Behaviour and the School rules
- Health & Safety
- Physical Intervention
- Allegations against members of staff.

### **Photographing children**

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the School play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes. However, these photographs should be for private family use only and should not be placed on the internet, on any other social networking sites or other websites, in any circumstances.

If there are Health and Safety issues associated with this i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow others to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without the parent's permission.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

The School cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions.

### **Confidentiality**

The School, and all members of staff at the School, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.

Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.

Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the designated member of staff for child protection.

### **Conduct of staff**

The School has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- cultural and gender stereotyping
- dealing with sensitive information
- giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
- contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites.
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties.

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy, we will view this as misconduct, and take appropriate action

### **Physical contact and restraint**

Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff should only do this where it is necessary to protect the child, or another person, from immediate danger; where the member of staff has received suitable training.

### **Allegations against members of staff**

If anyone makes an allegation that any member of staff (including any volunteer or Governor) may have:

- committed an offence against a child
- placed a child at risk of significant harm
- behaved in a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children

the allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and local agreements.

The Head Teacher, rather than the designated member of staff will handle such allegations, unless the allegation is against the head teacher, when the chair of governors will handle the School's response.

The Head Teacher (or Chair of Governors) will gather information about the allegation, and report these without delay to the Local Authority.

### **Before and after school activities**

Where the Governing Body transfers control of use of school premises to bodies (such as sports clubs) to provide out of school hours activities, we will ensure that these bodies have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the School on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies.

### **Contracted services**

Where the Governing Body contracts its services to outside providers, we will ensure that these providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the School on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the provider.