



Summary of Safeguarding Practice in Birch Copse School

Supplements Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (based on West Berks model policy)

RATIONALE

Birch Copse Primary School takes seriously its responsibilities and statutory duties to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We recognise that;

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.'

(Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023)

This document is supplementary to the Child Protection policy and is specific to Birch Copse School. It seeks to give clear direction to staff and others about the steps we take as a school when dealing with child protection issues through good practice and sound procedures in order to ensure that concerns, referrals and monitoring are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of our children.

In order to protect our children, the school is committed to safeguarding principles and prompt actions in order to promote the welfare of children, as described in ***Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023***. This supplement to the policy reflects that guidance.

KEY CONTACTS

Designated Safeguarding Lead	John Micklewhite (Headteacher)	headteacher@birchcopse.w-berks.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Paul Massey Kenny Cooling Sarah Smith (Pupil Premium) Kristy Fallaize (BASC)	pmassey@birchcopse.w-berks.sch.uk kcooling@birchcopse.w-berks.sch.uk ssmith @birchcopse.w-berks.sch.uk kfallaize@birchcopse.w-berks.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Peter Rimmer	safeguarding@birchcopse.w-berks.sch.uk

IMPLEMENTATION

This document is supplementary to our Child Protection policy and applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors to Birch Copse Primary School.

The school recognises it is responsible for making contacts and referrals rather than making enquiries and investigating in cases of suspected abuse.

It is recognised that school staff are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. The school is committed to notice when things are troubling our children, to listen, understand and take action, whilst ensuring on-going support to the child as an individual and acting as their advocate when needed.

GUIDANCE

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in safeguarding. Birch Copse Primary School does this in the following ways:

Information

1. All **staff** are required to read **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**, signing to say that they have done so. This record will be held by Alison Marsh (Headteacher PA).
2. All **Governors** are required to read **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**, and to confirm to the Clerk to the Governors that they have done so.
3. Staff receive **weekly** safeguarding **updates** to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.
4. All safeguarding procedures are in line with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and the Pan Berkshire Child Protection Procedures with links to these policy and procedures available to all staff through a shortcut on their laptop Desktops (icon headed West Berks Safeguarding Procedures).

Ethos

5. Maintaining a **child centred approach** in all aspects of safeguarding, which means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.
6. Establishing a physically as well as psychologically safe environment in which our children can learn and develop and where they know they can talk and be listened to. This is achieved by the creation of a positive school ethos, excellent teaching, and pastoral support offered to children. It is also achieved through the use of effective de-escalation techniques. Reasonable force, including restraint, is only used in strict accordance with the legislative framework and in line with the school's Behaviour Policy to protect our children and those around them. All incidents are reviewed, recorded and monitored.
7. Children know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty but all staff are trained to deal with a disclosure by a child. Staff are to be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.

Curriculum

8. Ensuring curriculum activities and opportunities for Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE) in our life skills lessons, equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from all forms of abuse such as bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism and extremism through promoting fundamental British Values and our own School Values. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged and help and support are given to children about how to treat others with respect.
9. Leaders oversee the safe use of technology when children are in their care and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or a child's well-being. The required policies with regard to the safe use of mobile phones and cameras in school are implemented.

Record-Keeping

10. Staff ensure that written records are recorded in a timely way on our **Safeguard My School System** and held securely. These records are shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent.
11. Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing signs or indicators that the positive welfare of a pupil is at risk and/or deteriorating, must make an accurate record on Safeguard My School

as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, giving the date, time and location. Making the record should not delay referring the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate authority.

12. The school follows the guidance set out in the government document: *Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018*. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and safety of our children.
13. If a pupil transfers from the school, these files, where appropriate, will be forwarded to the pupil's new school marked 'confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a school also uses the 'Safeguard My School' software, the safeguarding record will be transferred electronically.
14. Designated Safeguarding Leads ensure that a record of any referral is retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child from further harm.
15. Our Safeguarding Team meets together weekly to review all referrals and open cases.

Safer Recruitment

16. Ensuring the school practises Safer Recruitment processes in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels.
17. Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed regularly to ensure children are kept safe.

Whistle Blowing and Low-Level Concerns

18. Whistle blowing procedures are understood by children and staff. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
19. Low level concerns about staff are reported using the form at the end of this document, following the **Low-Level Concerns Policy** within the main Safeguarding Policy.
20. All visitors to the school sign-in to Reception and are required to wear a visitor's badge and lanyard. They are provided with security information – a quick-read guide to our safety and safeguarding procedures. Visitors that have shared their DBS wear a green lanyard and visitors for whom we have not seen their DBS wear a yellow lanyard.

Sensitivity

We recognise that children whose welfare is threatened and have difficult contexts in which to live, 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 children at risk. When at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Good lines of communication will be important.

Child on Child Abuse

The school recognises that Child on Child abuse can take many forms, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and in the Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges. Incidents of abuse can happen both in person and online.

The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and violence whilst remaining clear that incidents like these could happen within our school and wider community. Staff remain vigilant and challenge harmful behaviours if they arise.

Staff take all allegations of abuse seriously, investigating incidents and acting proportionately so that the victim and alleged perpetrator are appropriately supported. This might involve working with external agencies, like the Police or Children's Services.

E-Safety

This school has a separate E-safety Policy for staff and children, which should be considered in line with the Child Protection policy and this supplementary document.

Children may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some children may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal. The school, therefore, recognises its responsibility to educate children, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the

internet and related technologies.

If a member of staff receives an indecent image it must not be screenshot, requested or sent as a forward, copied, printed or shown to anyone else, as these are potentially criminal offences.

While teachers have the power to inspect files where it is believed there may be sexual imagery, this should only ever be done where the DSL believes it is necessary.

Single Central Record

A Single Central Record of employment checks is held by the school and checked termly by the Safeguarding Governor. The Single Central Record covers the following people:

- All staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the school, including volunteers.
- All members of the Governing Board.

Professional boundaries for staff and code of conduct

The School's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers is made freely available to staff. This allows everyone to understand our expectations of staff and to be able to identify any behaviour that maybe inappropriate.

Use of social networking sites by staff is also covered in our School's Code of Conduct and staff handbook.

Complaints

In the event of a complaint against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Leads, the Headteacher or a Governor, the procedures noted in the Complaints Policy and Procedure should be followed. A copy of the policy is available on the website or from the school, by speaking with a member of office staff, or by contacting the Clerk to the Governors.

School Closure

In the case of future full or partial closure, or a return to a blended learning model, the Leadership Team will issue specific guidance to all staff regarding live lessons and communications with children during the school closures. While there may be updates to this guidance as we respond to the changing nature of any closure, it will be underpinned by safeguarding procedures to protect both children and staff.

All email communication with children and families must be done through the school email system which remains subject to our filtering and monitoring software while accessed remotely.

The DSLs / DDSLs will be available to be contacted via phone or online video when working from home. The staff with responsibility for leading Safeguarding will continue to engage with social workers, and other professionals as needed during any period of remote working.

Where staff have a concern about the welfare of a pupil, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and report those concerns to the DSL / DDSL. It is essential that concerns are reported immediately, remote working should not delay escalation of concerns.

Where staff have a concern about the welfare of another member of staff, they should contact the Headteacher or a member of the Leadership Team.

The school will continue to provide on-site provision in line with government guidance, with a focus on supporting vulnerable children.

The Governing Board

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Board to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are children of the school. It is also the responsibility of the Governing Body to remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding arrangements that are brought to the attention of the school management or Governing Board.

Safeguarding will be discussed at Governing Board meetings and the Safeguarding Governor will use this as an opportunity to feed back any relevant information.

It will also be the role of the Governing Board to 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 supply teacher, contractor or volunteer.

If concerns arise then action should be taken in a prompt and timely manner.

“Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare”.

Evaluation

- The number of open Child Protection cases dealt with by the School will be anonymously reported to the Governors on a termly basis.
- Anonymous information regarding safeguarding will also be provided in the HTs annual report for the Governing Board detailing any changes to the policy and procedures and any other relevant issues.
- The school will complete the Annual LA Audit of Safeguarding in Schools. The findings of the audit will then be reported to the Pan Berkshire School’s Safeguarding Officer.
- The school will complete the LA Safeguarding Peer Reviews as part of a triad of schools and feedback to the West Berkshire Safeguarding Officer.

LOW-LEVEL CONCERN FORM – Birch Copse Primary School:

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’, that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with Birch Copse Primary School Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult’s suitability to work with children.

You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident(s) (and please use a separate sheet if necessary). The record should be signed, timed and dated.

Please see next page for form;

Next steps	
What would you like to see happen in response to your concern?	
Please state any other information that you believe is relevant to the processing of this concern.	
Signature	
For use by Headteacher (DSL) or DDSL upon receipt of concern	
Date and time concern received	
Signature of DSL or Deputy DSL	
Investigation Notes:	
Actions to be taken (e.g. no action/reclassification as allegation meeting the harms threshold.)	
Record of any discussion with the LADO:	
Final outcome including any retraining completed:	