

*Walmer Road School*  
***Child Protection Policy***

**Statement.**

In compliance with the new Act, Walmer Road school produced a comprehensive document titled "Child Protection Policy" which is used by the school and is in line with documented procedures used by all multi professional agencies involved with children. Walmer Road School endorses this policy and its contents and will follow the procedures detailed within it. The Headteacher accepts the responsibilities associated with the position.

Teachers and other staff who are in daily contact with children are well placed to notice signs of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, behavioural changes or failure to develop and thus the need to seek help.

All staff must be aware of the need to alert Social Services through the Head teacher if they believe an individual child is in need of protection. The HEAD TEACHER must be notified when abuse is suspected.

In addition, the HEAD TEACHER will also co-ordinate information from Social Services regarding children on the school roll who are either in care or subject to an Order following Child Protection proceedings. Further, the HEAD TEACHER will co-ordinate arrangements for the monitoring of children on roll who have been identified as being in need of protection.

**Statement Of Principles**

The following principles have been adopted by all agencies and professionals in working together to protect children.

1. The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and parent, the interests of the child must be paramount.
2. All children have a right to be protected.
3. Child abuse occurs in all cultures, all religions and all social classes.
4. Workers must be sensitive to the many differing factors which may need to be taken into account depending upon the child's racial, cultural and social background.
5. Children who have been abused need the same care and sensitivity regardless of whether they have been abused by a parent, carer or a stranger.
6. An aim should be to minimise damage to the child and promote recovery.

7. The responsibility to refer children thought to be at risk rests with the person who has the concern.

8. All agencies receiving information in the context of a child protection investigation must treat it as confidential. They must not disclose it for any purpose without consulting the person who provided it.

9. Procedures provide a framework to ensure that all agencies work together for the protection of children. They are not, and cannot be, a substitute for professional judgement and sensitivity.

10. Everyone, and particularly families, must be treated sensitively at all stages of the investigation.

## **Effective Practice In Child Protection**

Walmer Road School aims to provide an environment where;

- children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- pupils have suitable support and guidance so that they have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- staff work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibilities.
- to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
- staff are vigilant in case of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, reporting such cases to the schools senior staff and the child protection liaison officer so that information is effectively passed on to relevant professionals.
- staff monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, in a secure location, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences.
- child protection training is regularly carried out ensuring that the staff are up to date in their knowledge and use of their skills and expertise.
- staff contribute to inter-agency approaches to child protection.

- the curriculum promotes pupils awareness and builds confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.

### **The Head teacher**

The Head teacher will be the Headteacher or in his/her absence The Head of Curriculum will assume the Role.

The Officer will:-

- be involved in Borough Training Programmes relating to Child Abuse
- be expected to be familiar with the Borough Manual of Procedures.
- be in a position to give sound advice to colleagues relating to identification and procedure.
- form a good working relationship with all statutory and voluntary agencies ensuring that the School is in a position to support as well as identify.
- inform staff at regular intervals of any new regulations
- advise appropriate staff regarding pupils at risk or on the Child Protection Register.
- Attend Case Conferences / Network Meetings where appropriate and to prepare reports as deemed necessary.

### **Procedures for Teaching and Non Teaching Staff.**

The following procedures will be followed by all staff :-

1) If suspicious that a child has been abused report immediately to the HEAD TEACHER.

a) Note down the date and the time of the observations and the detail. This information will be important.

b) In the event of a child disclosing information you must make yourself available to the child. The child has chosen you, do not let that child down. All other responsibilities are secondary. Find a room where you can talk freely without being disturbed. Listen carefully making note of the detail. Reassure the pupil. Do not attempt to investigate or question the information.

c) Once the child has completed the disclosure inform the Headteacher immediately. In the event of the disclosure relating to a member of staff all information must be reported as normal. Do not disclose the information to anyone else

d)The HEAD TEACHER will discuss the disclosure with you and decide whether to report the information to Social Services.

e) Write down the details of the disclosure including date and time, and give it to the Head teacher who will enter the details into the child's confidential file.

f) It is important to note that often a child tells an adult information in confidence. In the event of abuse no confidentiality can be guaranteed. It is the responsibility of the adult to divulge all relevant information to the HEAD TEACHER.

2) A child suspected of being abused, or a child on the Child Protection Register.

a) Detailed information will be passed to all members of staff involved by the HEAD TEACHER.

b) It is important that all information received remains confidential.

c) The Head teacher will keep a book on the child. All other adults involved will be asked to report events to the Head teacher and to enter details into the book. Information entered in the book will be signed and dated by the relevant adult.

d) Members of staff will be expected to attend case conferences with the HEAD TEACHER and divulge any relevant information to the necessary agencies involved.

e) If a child has disclosed information to a particular adult, that adult will remain as the link between the child, the HEAD TEACHER and any other agency involved.

## **Definition Of Child Abuse.**

A child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse by parents or carers when the basic needs of the child are not being met through avoidable acts of either commission or omission.

### **a) Neglect**

This category is applicable where there is evidence that a child under the age of 17 years has been the subject of persistent or severe neglect or exposure to dangers which results in serious impairment of the child's health or

development, (including exposure or starvation ). This may be intentional or non intentional.

## **b) Physical Injury**

This category is applicable where one or more of the following prevail, and the child is under 17 years of age:

Where there is evidence that physical injury to a child is not consistent with the explanation given by the parent or carer or the injury is not consistent with the injuries typically found on a child at this particular developmental stage, or where there is evidence that a person having care, custody, charge or control of the child has knowingly failed to prevent the injury or acted without due regard to the child, or where it is admitted, or there is evidence reasonably to suspect, that an injury was inflicted by any other person having care of the child, or where there is injury which may have occurred when a child has been left unattended or inadequately supervised.

## **c) Children who have been sexually abused**

This category is applicable where children under the age of 17 years who have been subject to sexual abuse or molestation by any person or involved in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend and are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles, or which are against the Law. This includes abuse by strangers.

## **d) Emotional Abuse and / or Failure to Thrive**

This category is applicable to children under the age of 17 years where there has been a severe adverse affect upon behaviour and emotional development caused either by persistent or severe neglect or rejection on the part of the parent or carer. ( Medical, Psychiatric and Social assessments should be sought) or where children who have been diagnosed as suffering from severe failure to thrive for no obvious organic reason.

## **e) Grave Concern**

This category is applies to all children under the age of 17 years. Grave concern is defined as being where a child's situation does not currently fit the above categories but where social and / or medical assessments show there is evidence that they are at significant risk of abuse. For the purposes of Registration this category has to be sub-divided into

- 1) At risk ( stating category of potential abuse i.e. from a) to d) above
- 2) Where there are or were children of the same household who have been

abused ( and are on the register )

3) The household contains a known and convicted abuser

### **f) Ritualistic Abuse**

Ritual abuse is severe sexual, physical and emotional abuse that occurs in a context linked to symbols or activities that appear to have religious magical or supernatural significance and where over a period of time they are repeated and used to frighten, intimidate and confuse children.

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### **Common Sites For Accidental And Non- Accidental Injury**

