



## **Safeguarding Appendix 1**

**Date of Last Review:** October 2018

**Date of Next Review:** October 2019

**Responsibility:** Mrs L. Moriarty

**Advisory Body Signature:**

**This policy was updated to acknowledge the changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2016) and takes into account local procedures of the LSCB (Local Bromley Safeguarding Children Board).**

### **Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse**

A student may quite innocently disclose details of abuse that occurs within the family. It is also the case that students with experience of abuse may unburden themselves to a member of our staff as an adult they can trust. If this happens, a member of staff cannot promise to keep secret what the student has said.

It is vital that a member of our staff in whom a student has chosen to confide is sympathetic and supportive, encouraging dialogue in the following ways:

1. A room which is private and quiet but not too remote, should be found to discuss the concerns.
2. The member of staff should always believe what the student is saying – research has shown that students are very unlikely to fabricate allegations of sexual abuse.
3. The member of staff should remain calm and reassuring – students who suffered abuse may have low self-esteem and may withdraw if they detect signs of doubt or revulsion.
4. The member of staff should listen carefully and quietly but should never attempt to cross-examine the student or to press for evidence. Do not question or coach the student into saying information
5. The member of staff should not attach blame to any party.

The member of staff must then take the following steps:

1. Explain to the student that the disclosure must be reported – it is important for members of staff to stress that they believe the student's account and want to help by passing the information to the correct people.
2. Do not discuss concerns and fears with the parent(s) or indeed with anyone who is not involved in the case of the student. If the student's allegations prove to be untrue, reporting them to someone who is not concerned with the case of the student may be deemed defamatory.
3. In cases of serious disclosures, inform the designated lead, Mr O'Shaughnessy or deputy designated leads, Miss Moriarty or Miss Campbell immediately – this is essential. Do not delay due to other duties.
4. Log the conversation on MY Concern. This log should include all details of your conversation outline below.
  - a) The information revealed by the student in as much detail as possible.
  - b) Actions taken by the member of staff.
  - c) Date and Time when the suspicions were reported
  - d) To whom the suspicions were reported (was there anyone else in the room, where, context of how the conversation started).
5. The designated lead will then act on evidence and record on MY Concern what follow up was taken by the school.

This log must be completed by the end of the school day.

### **What if Abuse is Suspected?**

- The designated lead or deputy designated lead should always be informed either in person or by MY Concern.
- If the student is absent from school and absence may be suspect, this should be reported to Kim Gould's and the Safeguarding team – it may be that the student is kept at home to hide signs of abuse.
- Where injuries have been sustained, the member of staff should log on MY Concern of when and how the marks were noticed. If a student or parent makes a reference to the marks the member of staff should log what has been said.
- If a student is examined by the Safeguarding team or the medical staff, another member of staff should also be present.

### **The Role of the Member of Staff who Reports Allegations of Abuse**

Some members of staff feel disloyal and uncomfortable in reporting abuse; all members of staff have a duty to report findings to the designated lead or deputy leads. Any decision on action is taken by all the support services. Members of staff who attend case conferences (usually Designated Safeguarding Lead) report as accurately as possible on the student's health and welfare, behavior and educational attainment. It is the responsibility of the lead person on each case to complete paperwork in advance of each meeting. This lead person must also keep all files and MY concern up to date.

### **Recording Information**

- All records should be logged on MY concern by either the Safeguarding team or the member staff who the student disclosed to.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies will be responsible for recording information about each case and for collecting reports and notes from those involved in the case. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should not collect statements from the student but record or ask the person who initially listened to the student to record what the student said via MY Concern website.
- The log will document every aspect of the case as it develops including grounds for initial concern arising from, where appropriate, descriptions of injuries to the student or of worrying behavior, a note of what the student said, composition of the case team, minutes of meetings of the case team and decisions reached, records of interviews, evidence offered to the case conferences, minutes and outcomes of case conference.
- Access to records will be confined to members of the Safeguarding Team and appropriate agencies. All records should be kept separately from the main school file for security reasons in a locked filing cabinet and also MY concern access is restricted to key members of the Safeguarding team.

## **Abuse by Education Employees**

- It is essential that if ever there is a case of suspected abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff, that action is taken quickly and professionally in the interest and welfare of the student.
- In the rare event that any member of staff suspects any other member of staff of being involved in abuse or inappropriate behaviour, it is their responsibility to discuss these concerns with the Headteacher and designated lead or deputies, except where the suspect is either of these.
- Other than in a case where the suspected person is the Headteacher, the Headteacher should be immediately informed. The Headteacher should contact the LADO immediately, in addition to the following the normal procedures for Safeguarding.
- Where the Headteacher is suspected, the Chair of the Local Governing Body must be informed.

If the above procedures do not meet the concerns of the members of staff, then they should contact the Education Department directly.