



Madras V.A. Primary School

'Every child will succeed in a caring and supportive environment'

Child Protection Policy

At Madras, the health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to the adults who work here. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. The atmosphere within our school is a positive, caring one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves and be responsible members of society.

Our teaching of personal, social, emotional, well-being and citizenship education helps to develop positive attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.

Aims and objectives

This policy ensures that all staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- To raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
- To lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Definition of Child Abuse

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan.

Procedures

At Madras the designated lead in Child Protection is the Headteacher, Mrs Macey the Deputy Head, Miss Mira in her absence. Mrs Jarvis the Child Protection Governor.

If any teacher suspects that a child in his / her class may be a victim of abuse, they must immediately inform the Child Protection lead about their concerns. Abuse can be of a sexual, emotional or physical nature. It can also be the result of neglect. If a child makes a disclosure to an adult in school then the procedures as laid out in annexe 2 must be followed. The Headteacher (or Deputy in her absence) will inform without delay the Manager or Duty Social Worker at the local Safeguarding and Support Department Office. At this point there will be an opportunity to discuss what action needs to be taken in any individual case and **how to keep the child safe**.

If this discussion is confirmed as a referral, it should be confirmed in writing using the Safeguarding and Support department "Common Referral Form" and **MARKED CONFIDENTIAL**. A copy is forwarded to the Education Social Work Team Manager.

Professionals cannot remain anonymous when making referrals, although members of the public are able to request this.

Sir Ronald Waterhouse, 'Lost in Care', highlights the responsibility of all professionals in respect of child protection:

"Consideration should be given to requiring failure by a member of staff to report actual or suspected physical or sexual abuse of a child by another member of staff or other person having contact with the child to be made an explicit disciplinary offence".

Staff have a duty to refer any concerns they have to the designated lead within school. Should an allegation be made about the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors then the Deputy Headteacher and the Child Protection Governor would be responsible for contacting the Education Social Work Team Manager or the Duty Social Worker and initiating the procedures as described above.

Any action that the named person takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LEA Child Protection guidelines. All staff are aware of child protection procedures which are consistent with the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures*, a copy of which is kept in the staffroom.

The Headteacher works closely with the Safeguarding and Support Department when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, but the interest of the child is of paramount importance.

Other agencies involved include-

LEA - (Gerwyn Matthews -Education Social Work Team Manager) 01978 297532

Safeguarding & Support - 01978 292039 / Out of hours - 01978 264358

Parental Consent.

Parental consent is considered before discussing a referral to other agencies. Exceptions include:

- Where such action may put the child at increased risk.
- The possibility of threats or coercion.
- The loss of important evidence.
- The child's wishes that the parent/s are not informed, providing the child is competent to take that decision.
- Safeguarding and Support Department Team Managers in conjunction with the police will make the decisions whether or not parents should be informed and not the referrer.
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected (see below) the reasons for the decision will be fully recorded.

Fabricated or Induced illness

Where a member of staff has cause to believe that a child is at risk from, or is the subject of, fabricated or induced illness, the person with designated responsibility for child protection should be immediately informed. As with all forms of suspected harm, the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* will apply and the designated person will take responsibility for making an appropriate referral to Safeguarding and Support. All evidence relating to the concern should be kept safely as it may be needed to inform decision making or contribute to any consequent investigation.

School staff should not carry out their own investigations or discuss the matter with the child's parent or carer.

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat this accordingly. We only pass information on to appropriate persons. All concerns are recorded in the 'Concern File' housed in the headteacher's office.

Employees of the School

We require all adults employed in school to have their application vetted through police records (DBS) in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.

There may be times when teachers in our school, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children. All teachers have received documentation on the use of restraint. (WAG Safe and effective intervention-use of reasonable force and searching for weapons -guidance document no 041/2010)

All staff in the school receive regular training to raise their awareness of abuse and their knowledge of agreed local child protection procedures.

Role of the designated lead in Child Protection

The headteacher is the designated member of staff for Child Protection (or the Deputy Headteacher in her absence).

This person has a key role in monitoring the implementation of plans, post Child Protection Registration, in the context of their school.

Child Protection is a serious issue, particularly to those who may be victims, potential victims or involved in support. Frequently situations do not appear to be "black or white" and tensions often exist between agencies.

He or She:

- Understands of the importance of Child Protection and the role of the school in this process.
- Communicates effectively with other agencies and has the ability to appreciate all relevant perspectives.
- Relates well to pupils, parents and colleagues in order to gain their confidence.
- Ensures all members of staff are aware of the appropriate Child Protection Procedures and who the designated teacher is. This is particularly important for new staff.
- Ensures that the proper procedures are followed.
- Liaises with other agencies over cases of alleged abuse and the promotion of co-operative working including attendance at Case Conferences.
- Ensures that the designated named officer for Child Protection for Schools is aware of any breakdown in communication or problems with the implementation of local procedures.
- Maintains appropriate records regarding cases which cause concern and subsequent action taken.
- Ensures that ongoing monitoring exists for pupils having been the subject of child abuse concerns and/or, placed on the Child Protection Register and made the subject of a plan involving the school.

Monitoring

The school monitor pupils whose names appear on the child protection register / or have been the subject of child abuse concerns.

Risk Assessment procedures are in place.

This policy was adopted in October 2015

Signed _____ Chair of Governors

This policy will be reviewed in October 2016

Appendices:

1. Definition of types of abuse
2. Disclosure / Allegation of Abuse

APPENDIX 1

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home or **being bullied**, or, the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

APPENDIX 2

Disclosure / Allegation of Abuse

Should a young person disclose that s/he has been or is being abused, this information must be passed on. If a young person discloses abuse, the staff member should:

DO	DON'T
Listen to the child / young person rather than directly questioning him or her.	Stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
Encourage the child / young person to allow another person to be present.	Show shock or disquiet.
Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and are right to tell.	Guarantee confidentiality.
Inform the child / young person that you will have to pass information on.	Put words into the child / young person's mouth.
Make a written record of the discussion as soon as possible after the child has made the disclosure to you, taking care to record the timing, setting, personnel / other staff as well as what was said.	Be afraid to seek support from yourself from your line manager. However, it is not appropriate because of the high standard of confidentiality that must be maintained in child protection to discuss individual cases with personal friends or acquaintances, who may be able to identify the family concerned.
Be clear about your own position, you work for a Department that has a responsibility to protect children and young people.	Interrupt the child / young person.
Keep any drawings, paintings etc. that the child / young person may do to show what happened to him or her.	Expose the child / young person to mass examination by staff to verify any injuries.
Remain calm and reassuring.	Question the child, remember, this task must be undertaken by specially trained professionals.