



Eagle House School (Mitcham)

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Mitcham

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‘Unlocking the Potential’

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

SCHOOL STATEMENT ON PUPIL SAFETY AND WELFARE

The Proprietors recognise that children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that pupils cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure. The Proprietors will, therefore, provide a school environment which promotes self-confidence, a feeling of worth and the knowledge that students’ concerns will be listened to and acted upon.

The Proprietors will also ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties to report suspected abuse to the Children’s Services Departments and to assist those Departments acting on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse.

Eagle House School (Mitcham) is an independent special school which provides an appropriate education for primary-aged students who hold a Statement of Special Educational Needs for autistic spectrum disorders and associated social and communication difficulties. This includes young people with moderate or severe learning difficulties.

The School is committed to providing a safe environment for students and is compliant with national and local guidance and compatible with the School’s complaint procedures, staff recruitment, disciplinary procedure, and whistle blowing policy and procedures. The School is committed to providing an environment that is underpinned by an ethos where all staff and pupils are entitled to unconditional regard and respect.

This policy sets out Eagle House School (Mitcham)’s child protection procedures and pays regard to DfES publication *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)*, and DoH/DfEE publication *What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused*.

Eagle House School (Mitcham) recognises that class teachers, education support staff and residential staff are the first stage in the pastoral care of the student in the school. Students with special educational needs may be especially vulnerable to abuse. The nature of the special educational needs of students attending Eagle House School (Mitcham) means that it is likely to be difficult for them to express themselves. The students may also have a poor understanding of inappropriate behaviours directed towards them which might constitute abuse.



All staff at Eagle House School (Mitcham), school professionals, and the Proprietors of Eagle House School (Mitcham) have received satisfactory Enhanced Disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). Other staff who have might have access to students, such as site care staff, are also required to have received satisfactory Enhanced Disclosures from the CRB. The Eagle House Group is also a registered body with the CRB.

Visitors to the school, including parents and carers of current or prospective students, are not allowed unsupervised access to pupils.

1. Responsibilities of Designated Teacher for Child Protection and of Other Staff Trained in Child Protection

The Designated Teachers for Child Protection are the Head Teacher, Alan Simons and the Acting Deputy Head Teacher, Yvonne Gabriel who have undertaken Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) recognised training in Child Protection (London Borough of Merton). Paul Conrathe (Chief Executive of Eagle House Group) has also undertaken LSCB recognised training in Child Protection.

The Designated Teacher will undertake LSCB refresher training at least twice a year. It is the responsibility of the Designated Teacher:

- To ensure all staff are familiar with School and Merton LA guidelines for identifying and reporting abuse, including allegations of abuse by staff
- To ensure the school operates an effective Child Protection policy
- To ensure all staff receive training in child protection
- To be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with other agencies and support services over child protection issues and to maintain confidential records of all child protection casework

2. Responsibilities of Staff for Child Protection:

- Be able to identify signs and symptoms of abuse
- Report concerns to the Designated Staff without delay. If the allegation is against the Designated Teacher/registered person, then staff should report to the Head Teacher or the Proprietors
- Follow the relevant guidelines including Merton LA guidelines and procedures on child protection, and the Eagle House School, Merton policy on child protection
- Know to whom and how to report allegations against other school staff following the guidelines issued by Merton LSCB
- Monitor and report as required on the welfare, attendance and progress of pupils on the Child Protection Register, and
- Keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns



3. Staff Training and Support

Governors recognise the importance of child protection training for Designated Staff and for all other school staff who have contact with students.

Governors expect the Head Teacher/Designated Staff to ensure that all school staff, including support and ancillary staff receive foundation training in child protection as and when required and that new members of staff are made aware of school policy, procedures and guidelines when they join the school and receive appropriate training.

The Head Teacher is also expected to ensure that all staff receive regular support in respect of child protection work and know which senior member of staff to refer to for advice in the absence of the Designated Staff.

4. Recognising Child Abuse

Staff at Eagle House School (Mitcham) are well placed to observe outward possible signs of abuse, including changes in behaviour or failure to develop or thrive. Categories for concern which may be attributable to child abuse are:

a) 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 carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health, to a child whom they are looking after. This is sometimes described as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

b) 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they met 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, 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.

c) 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 (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

d) NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or 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.



5. Grave Concern

Children whose situations may not fit the above categories but for whom there is significant risk of abuse.

- If a member of staff suspects the above, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection shall be informed immediately
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection will assess information given and consult Sutton Children's Services
- Depending on the outcome of the referral to Children's Services, a multi-agency case conference may be convened. The outcome of this will depend upon the particular circumstances of the case but it may result in the child's name being entered on the child Protection Register
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection will keep the child's class teacher and other key workers informed of developments
- Every attempt will be made to offer support for the child within school and it is hoped that the school will continue to provide an environment in which he or she spends their time in safety

6. Child Protection and the Eagle House School (Mitcham) Curriculum

Eagle House School (Mitcham)'s curriculum offers important opportunities for helping students with ASDs to learn behaviours and skills which will help them keep safe, for example through the social skills curriculum. Students with ASDs typically have little awareness of danger, including of others who might wish to exploit their lack of awareness or understanding. This means that it is important to teach students attending Eagle House School (Mitcham) that it is not appropriate, for instance, to go up to strangers and kiss them, or to touch particular parts of the bodies of others or to allow others to touch them in certain places.

While recognising that adults need to be sensitive to the understanding and communication difficulties of young people with ASDs, it is important for these young people to develop the skills to say, sign or signal, "No!", to recognise "safe" adults, and to be able to communicate to these safe adults about things that happen to them which are not appropriate. In all cases, students should be given the opportunity to express themselves in their preferred mode of communication to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills.

It is also important that such work does not cause anxiety or upset normal, stable relationships between parents and carers and their children.

7. Confidentiality

By its very nature, child protection involves issues of confidentiality and sensitivity. Nevertheless, all staff have a duty to share relevant information with interested parties and agencies. If a student confides in a member of staff, that member of staff must sensitively explain that some issues may need to be referred on to others for the student's own sake.

The Designated Teacher holds all records and documentation relating to casework involving child protection issues in a locked confidential store.



8. Links with Other Agencies

Eagle House School (Mitcham) recognises that effective communication between different agencies is important in achieving effective co-operation in suspected or actual incidences of child abuse. To help achieve this Eagle House School (Mitcham) will liaise, co-operate and maintain working relationships with relevant officers and organisations in any issue concerning child protection, including Social Services, the student's LA, the Metropolitan Police Service, and the Health Service.

The Croydon Children with Disabilities Team has the responsibility for child protection investigation and monitoring of disabled children who are at risk of harm within Mitcham.

Their contact details are:

Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon, CR9 3JS

T: 020 8726 6400

9. Physical Contact with Children

It is inevitable that teacher and classroom staff will come into physical contact with students at Eagle House School (Mitcham). For example, students with ASDs may seek reassurance when they are anxious or upset, or they may seek comfort in the form of physical contact from adults. However, some forms of physical contact may not be age-appropriate, for instance students attempting to sit on the laps of adults.

It is also important for adults to appreciate that even innocent contact may be misconstrued, or that particular young people may be averse to physical contact of any kind. Furthermore, it is unacceptable to touch students on parts of their bodies that might be considered indecent, no matter how casually. Members of staff are expected to conduct themselves professionally in their relationships with the pupils at Eagle House School (Mitcham).

There may be rare occasions when it may be necessary to physically restrain a student. Such instances should involve the minimum necessary force, using approved safe techniques, and should only be undertaken to prevent a student causing injury to him or herself, to others or to property. Members of staff at Eagle House School (Mitcham) receive training in Proact-SCIP® - UK from suitably qualified instructors. Any use of physical restraint must be recorded and must follow the Eagle House School (Mitcham) policy which is underpinned by BILD, DCSF and Department of Health guidelines, including *Physical Interventions: A Policy Framework*. In some situations, it may be better to remove other students from the danger in the classroom or other setting rather than attempt to intervene physically.

10. Allegations against Staff

In the event of a child protection allegation against a member of staff, the Head Teacher must be informed immediately. If the allegation involves the Head Teacher, then it must be reported without delay to the Proprietors. In some cases allegations may be false or unfounded, but, regrettably, in other cases allegations may be true. Accordingly, all allegations will be dealt with in accordance with the guidance set out in DfES publication (*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment (2007)*) and Merton LSCB procedures. In the event of a member of staff, volunteer or agency worker leaving the school's employment or not renewing their contract because the school judges that he or she is unsuitable to work with children then this will be reported to the DCSF.



11. Report of Allegations

While it is expected that the Designated Person or Head Teacher, will lead on matters of child protection in his or her absence, nominated staff who have undertaken the appropriate training will lead.

Should anyone feel that the nominated person is failing to respond appropriately, or that the person is the perpetrator, then staff or any stakeholder should contact the relevant body outside school.



Eagle House Group

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