



MeadowHall

**EDUCATION**

THE PLACE  
TO EXCEL

# **MEADOW HALL (Primary School)**

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**September 2017**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.0 The purpose of this document is to assist all staff to safeguard and protect children who are at risk of abuse or neglect and to promote their well-being.
- 2.0 At Meadow Hall, we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that is of concern to them.
- 3.0 The safeguarding of children is everyone's business and Meadow Hall has a responsibility to ensure that her functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. These includes
  - Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
  - Protecting children from maltreatment
  - Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- 4.0 This policy and the following procedures apply to all paid staff, volunteers and governors working with or in Meadow Hall

## **5.0 Significant Harm**

- 5.1 There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements. Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child and/or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the maltreatment. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning). More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case, it is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside the family's strengths and support.
- 5.2 The following procedures outline the action to be taken if it is suspected that a child may be abused, harmed or neglected. There are four categories of abuse:
  - Physical Abuse
  - Emotional Abuse
  - Sexual Abuse
  - Neglect
- 5.3 It is acknowledged that a child can be abused, harmed or neglected in a family, institution or community setting or online by someone known to them or, less commonly, by a stranger; this includes someone in a position of trust such as a school staff member or other professional.
- 5.4 Safeguarding and the promotion of a child's welfare covers all aspects of the child's life and the school is committed to ensuring that all its actions in respect of a child are compatible with this aim. If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether the Early Help approach should be considered. Early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

## **6.0 Context**

- 6.1 The content of this policy is applicable to all paid staff, volunteers and Governors.
- 6.2 The governors and staff of Meadow Hall fully recognize the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognize that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.
- 6.3 All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 6.4 The aims of this policy are:
- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
  - To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff for the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- 6.5 Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers:
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
  - To support pupils who have suffered abuse.
  - To emphasize the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
  - By carefully following the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers, ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.
  - To set out a structured procedure within the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
  - By sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers.
  - To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
  - To ensure all staff are aware of the school's code of conduct.
  - By providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
- 6.6 Equality
- Some children's circumstances mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to easily access services. These children often require a high degree of awareness and co-operation between professionals in different agencies, both in recognizing and identifying their needs and in acting to meet those needs: Children in Specific Circumstances, edition 5, London Child Protection Procedures.

## **7.0 Procedures**

- 7.1 We will ensure that:
- We have 3 Designated Safeguarding Leads, who have responsibility for Child Protection and who undertake regular trainings for this role.
  - We have two designated Safeguarding deputies/Co-Head who will act in the Designated Safeguarding Lead's absence.

- The Safeguarding and child protection team are:  
Ms. Ekpenyong, Mrs. Adepoju, Mrs. Agbeyi, Mrs. Osundolire and Mrs. Obafisoye.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Head Teacher/Principal of Meadow Hall.

- Those named above have received appropriate training. The Designated Safeguarding Leads and their deputies will undertake formal training at least every two years. The Safeguarding Team will keep themselves up to date throughout the year.
- All school staff will receive training at least every year.
- A designated Governor for Child Protection/Safeguarding. This person is Mr. Daniel

7.2 In the event that there are concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will report to the police.

7.3 The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

7.3.1 All members of staff will develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and of their responsibility for referring any concerns.

7.3.2 All new members of staff will be given access to a copy of our safeguarding and child protection procedures as part of their induction into Meadow Hall.

7.3.3 All members of staff will know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. It is vital that our actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- Stay calm, listen to the child and if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it.
- Do not promise confidentiality; you can however promise privacy, reassure the child they have done the right thing. Explain who you will have to tell and why.
- If a child is making a disclosure the pace should be dictated by the child, do not ask leading questions, for example 'what did they do next?' It is our role to listen, not to investigate. Use open questions such as 'is there anything else you wish to tell me?'
- Accept what they are telling you; do not make judgments.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you.
- Don't criticize the perpetrator; this may be someone they love.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Pass this information on immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in his/her absence.

7.4 All staff, in the absence of a member of the safeguarding team, may raise concerns directly with The Lagos State Children's Social Care.

7.5 After a child has disclosed abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should take immediate action to contact The Lagos State Children's Social Care.

7.5.1 All staff must report all information immediately, on the same working day, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence to the Safeguarding Deputy.

- 7.5.2 The conduct of staff when in a 1:1 situation with a child should be managed in a way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their motives or intentions. All staff must ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place children or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to children.
- 7.5.3 All parents/carers will be made aware of the possibilities of staff members' actions with regard to child protection procedures.
- 7.5.4 All parents/carers, as part of the child induction process, will be made aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which is on the school website.
- 7.6 We will review our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures annually.

## 8.0 Types of abuse and neglect

- 8.1 **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- 8.2 **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- 8.3 **Emotional abuse:** This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 for as long as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying / online bullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
- 8.4 **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- 8.5 **Neglect:** 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## 8.6 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

8.6.1 Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under false pretence. It usually involves just one abuser who has inappropriate power – physical, emotional or financial – or control over a young person. The young person may believe they have a genuine friendship or loving relationship with their abuser.

8.6.2 **Boyfriend:** Abuser grooms victim by striking up a normal relationship with them, giving them gifts and meeting in cafés or shopping centres. A seemingly consensual sexual relationship develops but later turns abusive. Victims are required to attend parties and sleep with multiple men and threatened with violence if they try to seek help.

8.6.3 **Organized exploitation and trafficking:** Victims are trafficked through criminal networks – often between towns and cities – and forced or coerced into sex with multiple men. They may also be used to recruit new victims. This serious organized activity can involve the buying and selling of young people.

## 8.7 Prevent Radicalization and Extremism:

Meadow Hall has a duty to ‘prevent people being drawn into terrorism’. This is the ‘Prevent Duty’. Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training on *the Prevent Duty* and on tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school’s core values alongside the fundamental British Values, supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

8.8 **Sexting:** The term ‘sexting’ relates to the sending of indecent images, videos and/or written messages with sexually explicit content; these are created and sent electronically. They are often ‘shared’ via social networking sites and instant messaging services. This School will not tolerate sexting; it is inappropriate and illegal amongst young people and can have extremely damaging and long-lasting consequences. Sexting is unacceptable behaviour. The misuse of electronic communication, such as sexting, inappropriate comments on Facebook, being the object of cyber-bullying and online grooming are all potential safeguarding concerns. We have a responsibility to work with parents and carers in ensuring that all pupils are fully aware of the dangers and possible repercussions of sexting.

8.9 **Missing:** A child regularly missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff is expected to follow the school’s procedures for unauthorized absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. Missing is often an indicator of possible abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation.

## 9.0 Possible Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. This is not an exclusive list and many of the signs and symptoms could fall into more than one category. Guidance on recognizing signs and symptoms of abuse can be found in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*. Also students with learning difficulties often exhibit some of these signs (e.g. reluctance to get undressed for PE, constant tiredness) which are not necessarily signs of abuse but symptoms of their condition; however, it must also be remembered that disabled children are 3 times more likely to experience abuse or neglect than non-disabled peers.

## 9.1 **Physical Abuse**

- Unexplained injuries, bites, bruises or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss the causes of injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Disclosure of punishment which appears excessive
- Withdrawal from physical contact/aggressive behaviour
- Arms & legs kept covered in hot weather (excluding for reasons of cultural dress)
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendency
- Running away

## 9.2 **Emotional Abuse**

- Physical, mental, emotional or developmental lag
- Domestic violence
- Disclosure of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to making mistakes or fear of punishment
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviours
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging

## 9.3 **Sexual Abuse**

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Displays of affection which are inappropriate
- Alleged promiscuity or sexualized behaviour
- Fear of undressing
- Regression to younger behaviour
- Inappropriate internet use and possible 'grooming' concerns
- Genital itching or other genital/anal pain/injury
- Distrust of familiar adult
- Unexplained gifts of money, mobile phones etc.
- Depression and withdrawal
- Apparent secrecy about social activities or the identity of "special friends"
- Wetting or soiling, day and night
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares
- Chronic illness, especially throat infections and sexually transmitted disease

## 9.4 **Neglect**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems or unmet special needs
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- Poor social relationships
- Deterioration in school performance

- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

### 9.5 **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse;
- displaying inappropriate sexualized behaviour.

Staff should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognize themselves as such.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** The World Health Organisation identify girls between 4 and 10 as being the most at risk. FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include: - difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable - spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating - spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems - Frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems - prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return - reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations - confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear - talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

### 9.6 **Prevent Radicalization and Extremism:**

Early indicators of radicalization or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organizations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online, so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalizing anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

### 10.0 **Handling sexting and nude selfie incident:**

"Sexting in schools and colleges" will be used to triage concerns. This extract gives the initial actions that should be taken:

There should always be an initial review meeting, led by the DSL. This should consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people.  
*When assessing the risks, the following should be considered:*
  - Why was the imagery shared? Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?

- Who has shared the imagery? Where has the imagery been shared? Was it shared and received with the knowledge of the pupil in the imagery? • Are there any adults involved in the sharing of imagery?
- What is the impact on the pupils involved?
- Do the pupils involved have additional vulnerabilities?
- Does the young person understand consent?
- Has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?
- If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person – in most cases, imagery should not be viewed
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown.
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the young people involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved - in most cases parents should be involved

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care should be made if at this initial stage:

1. The incident involves an adult
2. There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
3. What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
4. The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
5. You have reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presented as suicidal or self-harming

If none of the above applies then a school may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care (a school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light).

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the school's pastoral support and disciplinary framework and if appropriate local network of support is available and accessible.

## **11.0 What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred**

11.1 You must report the concerns immediately, on the same working day, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputies. You may report verbally, but this must be followed up by a written account, on the same working day.

### **11.2 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:**

- 11.2.1 Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.

- 11.2.2 Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate.
- 11.2.3 They should also consult with The Lagos State Children's Social Care services in the first instance.
- 11.2.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should make a referral to The Lagos State Children's Social Care or the police without delay if it is agreed during the consultation or if there is an immediate risk to the child.
- 11.2.5 A telephone referral should be made and confirmed in writing using a Lagos State Children's Social Care form on the same working day if requested. The Lagos State Children's Social Care team should acknowledge the referral within one working day and should be contacted if no acknowledgement has been received within 3 working days.
- 11.2.6 Following referral, the Lagos State children's social care team should, within one working day, consider the next course of action, record their decision in writing and notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead that they have made a decision.
- 11.2.7 Concerns will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- 11.2.8 It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the **child protection agencies**. If for any reason you believe that the Designated Safeguarding Lead has not responded appropriately to your concerns, it is then your responsibility to contact the Lagos State Team directly.

## **12.0 Responsibilities**

- 12.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead or those deputising for them, is responsible for:
  - 12.1.1 Adhering to the Lagos State and Meadow Hall procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
  - 12.1.2 Keeping full written chronological records of in-school concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
  - 12.1.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely; and are separate from pupil records.
  - 12.1.4 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
  - 12.1.5 Checking the attendance of children subject to a Child Protection Plan on a daily basis.

## **13.0 Supporting Children**

- 13.1 We recognize that a child who is abused or witnesses violence and/or abuse may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognize that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognize that a child may feel self blame.
- 13.2 We recognize that the school may provide the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 13.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 13.4 Meadow Hall will support all children through:
  - The curriculum
  - The school ethos
  - Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school, giving children a sense of being valued.
- Ensuring children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Lagos State Children’s Social Care services as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the child’s new school.

#### **14.0 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

We recognize that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.

The Director of Studies, Designated Safeguarding Lead, or staff generally will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a “need to know” basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with **other agencies** in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

#### **15.0 Supporting Staff**

We recognize that staff working in Meadow Hall who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to discuss the situation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and to seek further support as appropriate.

#### **16.0 Safer Recruitment**

At Meadow Hall we will ensure we practice Safer Recruitment by undertaking enhanced Nigeria Police checks of staff and volunteers who work with children. Recruitment adverts will highlight the priority that the school places on this and the school’s commitment to safeguarding. References and medical checks will be made on all new staff, and all staff will have references on file.

#### **17.0 Allegations against pupils – peer on peer abuse**

- 17.1 The school recognizes the different forms peer on peer abuse, and is clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.
- 17.2 Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures. Professionals should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- 17.3 Professionals should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between/amongst young people.
- 17.4 Professionals should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.
- 17.5 The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may

have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or at risk of suffering, Significant Harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

- 17.6 If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:
- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
  - The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
  - There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.
- 17.7 If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

## **18.0 Allegations against staff**

- 18.1 At Meadow Hall we recognize the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the Head teachers without delay.
- 18.2 We understand that a child or 3<sup>rd</sup> party may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- 18.3 We understand that an allegation is wider than just those where it is considered that there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm. Some allegations may indicate that a staff member is unsuitable to work with children.
- 18.4 An allegation is defined as when an adult has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.
- 18.5 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation, or having the concern, will immediately inform the Head Teacher; this must be done on the same working day.
- 18.6 The Head Teacher on all such occasions will discuss immediately, on the same working day, the content of the allegation with The Lagos State Children's Social Care before taking any further action.
- 18.7 The school will not internally investigate until instructed by The Lagos State Children's Social Care
- 18.8 The school will follow The Lagos State Children's Social Care procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school. These are also contained in the London Child Protection Procedures 5<sup>th</sup> edition 2015.

## **19.0 Whistleblowing**

We recognize that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

## **20.0 Physical Intervention**

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. Staffs need to be aware that if a child sustains an injury as a result of physical intervention Safeguarding and Child Protection processes must be followed.

## **21.0 Bullying**

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **22.0 Racial Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **23.0 Health & Safety**

Our Health, Safety & Welfare policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from school when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **24.0 Prevention**

We recognize that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

## **25.0 Record Keeping**

25.1 The Designated Safeguarding Leads will keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals and concerns. These should be kept separately from academic records, in a confidential file stored in a secure cabinet, accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. They are exempt from records available for examination by parents or children unless subject to a court order.

25.2 Meadow Hall promotes high quality record keeping in respect of all concerns about children's welfare. The records should be completed in a timely manner and include all relevant information such as dates, times, others involved, witnesses etc. All records should be signed and dated. The child's confidential record should include a front sheet chronology of concerns to support the understanding of the impact of past concerns, patterns and escalation of concerns.

25.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should retain a digital copy of the child protection file. This can be digital, which should be stored in a secure area accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Child Protection records about a student who has ceased to become of compulsory school age should be archived and catalogued. Records must be kept until a child reaches 25 years of age; child protection records must be kept for 35 years after the child leaves the school.

25.4 When making a referral, the referrer should keep a written record of:

- Discussions with child
- Discussions with parent/s

- Discussions with staff
- Information provided to the Lagos State Safeguarding
- Advice given and decisions taken (clearly times, dated and signed)

25.5 The referrer should confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours, using the inter-agency referral form.

25.6 Meadow Hall will ensure that we keep up-to-date personal data records of all the children by regularly reminding parents to inform us of any change in family circumstances and requesting an annual update.

## **26.0 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

26.1 We recognize that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

26.2 The Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

26.3 However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

26.4 When considering sharing information, the staff will consider the seven golden rules:

26.4.1 Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information, it provides the framework

26.4.2 Be open & honest with the person from the outset about how information may be shared

26.4.3 Seek advice; do not fail to share information because you are unsure what to do

26.4.4 Share with consent where appropriate & respect the wishes of those who refuse consent unless you believe that there is a risk of harm to child if the information is not shared

26.4.5 Consider safety and well-being of the child and base information sharing decisions on this

26.4.6 Ensure all information shared is Necessary, Proportionate, Relevant, Accurate, Timely & Secure. Ensure any third party or hearsay information is identified and that you have consent to share it

26.4.7 Keep a record of your decision and reasons for it. Record what you have shared, with whom and the purpose.