

All reports regarding child protection or safeguarding should be made directly to the Education Matters Group Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) on **07854 110416**. This number is for child protection issues only and is monitored between 9am and 9pm, seven days a week by either the DCPO or appointed deputy.

**Call 999 if a child is in immediate danger**

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#### Aims of this policy

Education Matters Group is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Children are defined as anyone up to the age 18 years. This policy creates a framework to ensure that appropriate measures are taken by both Education Matters Group staff and candidates, and both are aware of their responsibilities to identify, report and manage incidents of abuse or potential abuse against children or vulnerable adults.

This includes:

- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Ensuring that everyone involved is child centred – i.e. the needs and views of the children are paramount

#### Policy Basis

This policy has been compiled with reference to the following key Legislation/Guidance:

- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989)
- The Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Children Acts 1989 & 2004
- The Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DfE 2006)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Working together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2015)

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2015)

#### Types of abuse

The DfE (Department for Education) define 4 types of abuse:

#### **Physical Abuse**

Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also include fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Persistent emotional maltreatment of a child causing severe and adverse effects to emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- 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.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (for example violence in the home).
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

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. Sexual abuse 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.
- 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).
- Discussions relating to sexual behaviour, human reproduction or interpersonal interaction between humans of both/either sex where it is not relevant to the specific lessons being undertaken

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## 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 include:

- Maternal substance abuse during pregnancy.
- 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.
- Neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Specific safeguarding issues which may indicate abuse include:

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Mental health
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Education Matters Group Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)

The DCPO is the lead officer responsible for Child Protection within Education Matters Group. This includes:

- Reporting all allegations made against staff or candidates to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Referring all cases of suspected abuse to the relevant local authority or school child protection officer
- Briefing the board of any relevant child protection issues that arise
- Managing child protection related information. Ensure child protection files are stored appropriately and respond to requests for information sharing from the local authority or other agencies
- Providing support, advice and expertise to staff and candidates on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Ensuring continuous development and annual review of child protection policies and procedures
- Ensuring all staff and candidates receive adequate training and support relating to child policy and procedures so that policies are known and used appropriately
- Undergoing appropriate child protection training at least every two years
- Ensuring the DCPO contact number is covered during prescribed hours, either personally or by a named deputy who is appropriately trained or resourced to carry out all described duties.

The DCPO has the status and authority within the organisation to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.

### **All staff and Candidates**

All Education Matters Group staff and candidates have a responsibility to:

- Read and understand provided materials relating to child protection
- Ask questions or seek clarifications where required policy and guidance are not understood
- Follow guidance and procedures appropriately, including responding to disclosures, escalating all referrals or related information to the DCPO immediately and respecting confidentiality.

Education Matters Group staff must pay close attention to the requirements set out for safer recruitment, following associated guidance and procedures during the recruitment stages of staff and candidates.

### Child Protection Procedures

#### **Responding to a Disclosure**

All staff and candidates must be aware of how to respond to a disclosure of information which leads to child protection concerns. A disclosure can be made by a child or adult about themselves or another child or adult. When information is shared with you which causes concerns of possible abuse, your requirement is to accept the information being shared without influencing it, as well as providing support and reassurance to the child and managing expectation. When information is disclosed you must:

- Be clear that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The safety of children overrules confidentiality concerns.
- Avoid leading questions. Listen carefully to what is being said and allow the child to speak without interruption as much as possible.
- Accept what you are being told without judgement and avoid overreacting with a strong emotional response, it is important to remain calm during the disclosure.
- Offer support and explain to the child they have not done another wrong sharing the information with you.
- Clearly and calmly explain what you will do next and that you will need to share what has been discussed with another adult who can help.
- Immediately after the disclosure make a written record of events. Be as clear and precise as you can, use the same words the child used, make note of the date, time, venue, who was present and the behaviours, mood and actions of the child during the disclosure. Do not create this record during disclosure. Your full attention should be given to the disclosure itself and making notes may influence what information is shared.
- It is not your role to investigate. You must always refer, never investigate.

**What to do if you have a concern relating to child protection as a result of disclosure, observation of behaviour (of a child or adult), something another adult has said to you or any other reason for concern:**

1. Tell the child what you will do next.  
Do not promise to keep the information a secret, reassure the child you will need to tell somebody else who can help.

2. Write down what you have been told / have observed.  
Do this as soon as possible after the event. Try to avoid placing your own values on your record of events, use their own words and phrasing, not your own. Document the date, time and place of the event as well as who else was there. Make note of actions, behaviours and mood during the event.
3. Call 07854 110416 and speak with the Education Matters Group DCPO or appointed deputy. In the unlikely event you cannot contact someone using the DCPO number, contact the Education Matters Group office and ask to speak with a senior manager.
4. Education Matters Group DCPO will review the referral and, where appropriate, share the information with the relevant child protection officer at the school / local authority and other agencies or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). The DCPO will confirm to you what actions have been taken, who is lead officer in charge of investigating and responding to the information and inform you what further involvement may be required of you. Await instruction, do not make independent decisions regarding, for example, informing the parents or other staff – the relevant authority (e.g. Education Matters Group DCPO, School / LA DCPO / LADO etc...) will manage a co-ordinated response and inform you of the decisions taken.
5. The Education Matters Group DCPO will create a regularly updated child protection log of the incident, inform relevant authorities of any disclosure and update the Education Matters Group management team. Information will only be shared with relevant staff if there is a clear need for them to become involved. When information is shared internally, consideration will be given to the confidentiality of the child involved and information sharing will be limited to clearly relevant details only. All information sharing will be logged as part of the child protection file.

### Safeguarding and Keeping Children Safe

Everyone has a role to play to support the safeguarding of children. The following policy outlines specific measures taken by Education Matters Group to ensure that: unsuitable people are not recruited into a position of trust with children, complaints or allegations against staff and candidates are investigated appropriately, and a clear code of conduct for staff and candidates is in place.

### **Safer Recruitment**

Education Matters Group is committed to preventing people who pose a risk of harm from working with children. All our candidates are thoroughly vetted and suitable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable candidates being registered with Education Matters Group. This includes the following for all applicants:

- Face to face interviews
- Review of work history and investigation of employment gaps
- At least 2 satisfactory references from appropriate academic institutions commenting on the applicants suitability to work with children
- Using the Employer Access Service to check for Secretary of State Prohibition Orders where appropriate
- UK police check (DBS)
  - Enhanced with children's barred list
  - Appropriate risk assessment carried out with DCPO and at least one other suitable member of staff for any DBS containing information.
- Overseas Police Checks where appropriate

- Verification of a candidates identity, right to work in the UK and relevant qualifications
- Confirmation that all candidates are physically and mentally fit to work with children as per the Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards Regulations 1999
- Signing of a declaration relating to the relevant 'Disqualification by Association' requirements

All Education Matters Group staff undergo child protection training in line with this policy during their induction period and are given a copy of the child protection policy and procedures. Staff who will visit school premises as part of their core role are also be subject to police checks as described above.

### **Allegations against Staff or Candidates**

Allegations of abuse against staff or candidates can be made by either a child or an adult and should be made immediately to the DCPO. Allegations made against the DCPO should instead be made to another member of the senior management team who will inform the other team members. Another suitable senior member of staff will then be appointed to take the place of the DCPO in response to the allegation.

Allegations will be referred to the relevant LADO by the DCPO and the subject of the allegation will have their working arrangements reviewed. Suspension will be considered if:

- It is considered continuation may place a child at significant risk
- The allegations will require police investigation
- There is potential grounds for dismissal due to the seriousness of the allegations.

### **Code of Conduct:**

Education Matters Group is committed to the safeguarding the welfare of children and requires its candidates to share this commitment.

Candidates are required to provide a safe learning environment for the student and themselves during assignments and immediately refer safeguarding concerns to the Education Matters Group Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO), this includes but is not limited to:

- Candidates providing the relevant officer with their original DBS certificate during their first assignment. A verified copy may be created.
- Never asking a student personal questions about their background.
- Acting as a positive role model.
- Ensuring that assignment takes place in an appropriate indoors location.
- Ensuring that you are not alone with the student. This applies before, during and after the assignment.
- Not providing transport for the student to or from the venue, or organising transport on the students' behalf.
- Not sharing personal contact details such as mobile phone number, email address or social networking information with the student
- Not making physical contact with students
- Immediately referring suspected signs of neglect and abuse (including physical or emotional or sexual) to the DCPO. Always refer, never investigate yourself.