

Introduction

The protection of children is the proper concern of everyone in a position to help. Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children rests with their parents, but a range of services is available to help them with this task.

The safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to all those involved in Education.

Children can develop a special and close relationship with school staff, and view them as significant and trustworthy adults. It is not surprising therefore that children, if they have been abused, may confide or disclose to a teacher or other member of staff.

School staff are also in a unique position to notice any change in demeanour or circumstances. There is the opportunity to notice injuries, marks or bruises when children are doing PE, games or swimming which might indicate a child has been abused.

The school takes account of the government guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, and follows the procedures laid down in that document.

All staff appointed to the school will be subject to enhanced CRB checks and information will be sought from the Independent Safeguarding Authority where it is deemed necessary. All those who have regular contact with the school including governors and parent volunteers will also be subject to CRB clearance.

Aims

To set out procedures for ensuring that the school meets its responsibility for safeguarding pupils from abuse.

To protect staff against allegations of abuse. The school has adopted the LA Code of Conduct for school staff accused of child abuse. All staff will adhere to this code of conduct in line with national guidelines and supported by the ACPC (Allied Child Protection Consultants).

Procedures

1. Reporting to the designated teacher

Any concerns about pupils must be discussed with the designated teacher [Ms Jo Evans], or their named deputies in their absence [Mrs Cathryn Knowlson or Mrs Hayley Davies] as soon as possible and at least by the end of the teaching session.

2. Immediate response to the child

It is vital that any staff actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries, for example:

- listen to the pupil, if you are shocked by what is being said try not to show it;
- it is acceptable to observe bruises but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them;
- if a disclosure is made the pace should be dictated by the pupil without their being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as “what did they do next?” or “where did they touch you?”. The staff role is to listen not to investigate. Staff must use open questions such as “is there anything else you want to tell me?” or “yes?” or “and?”;
- accept what the pupil says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking questions such as “why didn’t you tell me before?”;
- do acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this;
- don’t criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love;
- don’t promise confidentiality, reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the designated teacher) and why. It is important that you don’t make promises that you cannot keep such as “I’ll stay with you all the time” or “it will be alright now”.

Recording Information

Staff should:

- make some brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards; record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. Notes must be signed and dated;
- observed injuries and bruises are to be recorded on the Body Map;
- note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil (do not translate into “proper terms”);
- keep these original notes and pass them to the designated teacher.

The school will follow up all referrals to Social Services within 24 hours in writing.

Support

i) Pupils and families

The school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Therefore, this school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;

- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- the implementation of school behaviour management policies;
- a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of the behaviour from that which the pupil displays;
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support pupils and their families;
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the pupil's interests to do so; and
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations

ii) Staff

Receiving a disclosure or observing signs of abuse can be very distressing. All staff should discuss their feelings with the designated teacher or other senior member of staff.

Incidents of a child protection nature can affect staff not directly involved. Meetings should be used to support staff in this situation.

Members of staff may be asked to attend a Strategy Meeting. You will need to take any information the school may hold.

You may be required to attend a child protection case conference for which you should provide a report [CPL1rep School Report for Initial Child Protection Conference; CPL6rep School Report for Review Child Protection Conference].

The designated teacher will be available to support and advise you.

Any member of staff who is concerned about involvement in child protection issues can discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

Confidentiality

Staff have the professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly investigating agencies. If a pupil confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the designated teacher for the child's own sake. At the same time, the child should be reassured that the matter will be only be disclosed to the designated teacher, who will then decide on appropriate action. Staff who receive the information about children and families in the course of their work should have the information only within professional context. Child protection records should be kept securely locked.

Personal information about all pupils and their families is regarded by those who work in this school as confidential. All staff will aim to maintain this confidentiality. All records relating to child protection incidents will be

maintained by the designated teacher and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children.

Parents

- Parents play an important role in protecting their children from abuse. The school is required to consider the safety of the pupil and should a concern arise professional advice will be sought prior to contacting parents.
- The school will work with parents to support the needs of their child.
- The school aims to help parents understand that the school, like all others, has a responsibility for the welfare of all pupils and has a duty to refer cases to the Social Services in the interests of the child.

When a pupil transfers to another school

- If the pupil is on the child protection register, their Social Worker will be contacted by the designated teacher and informed of the transfer.
- When the child changes schools within the authority, child protection records will be passed on to the designated teacher at the receiving school.
- When the child is moving to another authority, information will be passed onto the next school's designated teacher. Case conference minutes are not transferred but the date, name of chair, LA and outcome will be included on the records transferred.

Training

- The school has a commitment to training and attendance at inter-agency child protection meetings. Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met.
- The designated teacher will be expected to cascade learning to the wider staff group via meetings etc.

Case conferences and core group meetings

- In each case the school will assign the appropriate member of staff to attend a child protection case conference. Where possible the member of staff will be accompanied by the designated teacher but this may not always be possible. You should prepare a report presenting this to the case conference chair at the start of the meeting. The chair will gather all information and assess the risks. You will be asked for your view in respect of registration.
- If a child's name is placed on the local Child Protection Register a Core Group will be agreed. All Core Group members meet regularly (at least monthly) to monitor and progress the Child Protection Plan and Core Assessment. Attendance at these meetings will be given priority.
- The designated teacher will be available to advise and support you.

- Where no registration has taken place the school maybe asked to monitor and excepts responsibility for clarification about information required, timescales, and reporting methods.

Responsibilities

The Governors

- The governing body has appointed a named governor [Ms A. Grainger] to liaise with the school's designated teacher on safeguarding pupils issues.
- The governors will also appoint a designated teacher [Mrs P. R. Thomas Headteacher] for safeguarding pupils and ensure that she is trained and receives further updating at least every two years.
- The governing body will receive and consider annually a report from the Headteacher on safeguarding pupils in the school.
- The named governor will determine appropriate training (in liaison with the designated teacher) for the governing body.
- The governing body will determine any changes to the school's policies and procedures as appropriate.
- The governing body is responsible for reviewing and amending the policy as appropriate.

The Headteacher

- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that the outcomes are monitored. The Headteacher will report annually to the governors on the working of the policy.

The designated teacher

- The designated teacher for child protection is: **Jo Evans**
- Their deputy or the person to contact in their absence is: **Cathryn Knowlson or Hayley Davies**
- The designated teacher is responsible for ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual problems associated with child protection are investigated and dealt with.
- The designated teacher will ensure that he/she is aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and will keep the staff informed as appropriate.
- The designated teacher will ensure that appropriate training for staff is organised annually.
- The designated teacher will liaise with the governing body's nominated governor for safeguarding pupils.

The Staff

- All staff, including supply teachers and other visiting staff (e.g. school nurses) and those supporting school trips, will be informed of the designated teachers' name(s) and the school's policy for the protection of children:

During their first induction to the school✓

Through the staff handbook✓

Whole staff training or briefing meetings✓

- All staff need to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse. They should report any concerns if not immediately, as soon as possible, that day to the designated teacher or named deputy. If in any doubt they should consult with the designated teacher.
- All relevant national and local procedures will be made available for staff reference and is located in the PPA Room.

Equal opportunities

All staff and governors with responsibilities under this policy must take into account the equal opportunities policies when discharging their duties.

Monitoring and review

The designated teacher will monitor the working of the policy and will report as required to the head.

The head will report to the governors annually on the working of the policy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Cllr A Crimmings

Chair of the Governing Body

Appendix 1

Child Protection - Staff Guidance

A. Procedures to be followed:

- Members of staff who suspect abuse of a child should report their suspicions to the designated teacher. The designated teacher will determine whether the Social Services and in some instances, the Police will be notified. It is the role of the police to investigate this type of incident.
- Information is received from primary schools, other schools, parents, the Social Services and various other sources. The weekly Forum Meeting to be used to pass on relevant details. Where it is thought that the Social Services are not aware of the case they will be informed.
- Risk Register. A confidential register will be maintained of all those pupils known to be at risk. Names will be entered on the register if it is confirmed by Social Services that the child is actually at risk.
- Where a child is known to be at risk, the named member of staff will inform the relevant pastoral staff and members of the Leadership Team.
- Staff who organise educational visits should publish the names of those pupils involved and seek information about any involvement of Social Services.
- The named member of staff who will, when possible, attend any reviews called by the Social Services.

Procedures in respect of Child Abuse

Abuse exists where children under the age of seventeen years have been physically or emotionally abused or severely neglected. Abuse of children who are over five years of age is likely to be noticed by the school staff and Health Workers or Education Welfare Officers. It is essential, therefore that all those whose work brings them into contact with children and their families know the signs of child abuse and are aware of the procedures that they must follow to safeguard the child.

The Education Service in general, and this school in particular, has the role of recognising and responding to potential indicators of abuse and neglect, all other action should be taken by those with statutory powers to help the child. Early contact and close liaison with such agencies is therefore regarded as essential by the school.

In the event of an actual or suspected case of child abuse by adults, parents, teachers or any other adult. It is the responsibility of school staff to report this to the designated teacher (or Head) as soon as possible. The designated teacher is responsible for ensuring that children are identified and the appropriate agency involved. It is important that if staff, overhear children discussing 'abuse' or 'neglect' that this information is relayed for investigation.

Staff leading school visits, particularly residential ones, should provide a list of those children taking part to the designated teacher to ensure that they are made aware of all essential information relating to the pupils in their care.

B. Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Injuries

Bruises or abrasions especially about the feet, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not normally be expected to occur given the age of the child.

Damage or injury to the mouth of a child e.g. bruises or cut lips.

Bite marks.

Burns and/or scalds especially small circular burns (often cigarette burns).

Bilateral injuries such as two black eyes – this rarely occurs accidentally.

Fractures in children under two years old.

Poisoning and other misuse of drugs

Repeated minor injuries and/or self harming

Other signs include:

Lethargy.

Withdrawal.

Wariness.

Passivity.

Frozen awareness.

An unkempt, dirty appearance.

Developmental retardation without a medical condition.

Over-solicitous behaviour towards adults.

Failure to thrive or grow without an underlying medical condition.