



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of a Child Protection Policy

To inform staff, parents, volunteers and governors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children.

To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures

The school follows the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board- a guide to procedure and practice for all professional staff in Hertfordshire who work with children.

School Staff & Volunteers

All school staff and volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with children.

They should be aware of the important role the school has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the appropriate referral process.

Mission Statement

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to when they have a worry or concern.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

2. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

In order to protect children from harm the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2004

Education Act (2002), section 175

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures (2007)

DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006)

HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006)

HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or are at risk of abuse - these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

- DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006) places the following responsibilities on all schools:-
 - Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
 - Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions
 - Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse
 - A Designated Senior Person should have responsibility for co-coordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies
 - Staff with designated responsibility for Child Protection should receive appropriate training

DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006) also states that "All parents need to understand that schools and FE colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils or students, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures, and that a school or FE college may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare."

3. THE DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection in this school is:

NAME: Mark Allchorn

It is the role of the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection to:-

- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
- Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff
- Ensure that the Head Teacher is kept fully informed of any concerns
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to Children, Schools and Families)
- Liaise with CSF social care teams over suspected cases of child abuse
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential'
- Submit reports to, and ensure the school's attendance at Child Protection Conferences
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support

A Deputy DSP should be appointed to act in the absence/unavailability of the DSP.

The Deputy Designated Senior Persons for Child Protection in this school are:
Mrs Julie Lloyd and Mr Martin Monks

4. SCHOOL PROCEDURES

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the Designated Senior Person (or his deputy)

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.

The Designated Senior Person will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Children, Schools and Families. If it is decided to make a referral to Children Schools and Families this will be done with prior discussion with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the school has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan (formerly referred to as the Child Protection Register) and a written record will be kept

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the Designated Senior Person will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Senior Person at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file

5. WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he or she:

Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with accidental injury.

Regularly has unexplained injuries.

Frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).

Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained.

Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.

Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and /or inappropriate to his or her age/stage of development.

Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

Any other cause to believe that a child may be suffering harm.

6. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff / volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief

- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely and accept what is being said
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Pass information to the Designated Senior Person without delay

Support

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Senior Person.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- All staff in schools, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children Schools and Families and the Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

8. RECORD KEEPING

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation

Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court

Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child

Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury

Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions

All records need to be given to the Designated Senior Person promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer (pro-forma available on the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning)

9. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff/volunteer, the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the Head Teacher.

If any member of staff/volunteer has reason to suspect that another member of staff/volunteer may have abused a child at the school, or elsewhere, they must immediately inform the Headmaster. They should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident/alleged incident.

If the concerns are about the Headmaster, then the **Chair of Governors** should be contacted.

The Head Teacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (07920 283106 or 07995 288271)

If it is decided that the allegation warrants further action through Child Protection Procedures the Headmaster must immediately make a referral to CSF Client Services (01438 737511).

Under these circumstances the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made should not be informed of said allegation until future action is agreed with the Social Work Team Manager. It may be necessary to discuss appropriate steps to ensure other children are not at risk. The allegation will be investigated in accordance with Section 10 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families, the Headmaster and Local Authority Designated Officer will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

10. VETTING EMPLOYEES AND OTHERS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

The Headmaster appoints teaching and non-teaching staff employed by the school. The Headmaster's Secretary will be informed of new staff appointments and will initiate the appropriate Police Checks before contracts for appointment are finalised.

11. USE OF FORCE AND RESTRAINT

The law allows the Headmaster to permit his staff to use reasonable force if a student might injure himself or someone else, or if a criminal offence is being committed. Physical intervention should only be used after verbal strategies have failed to restore order: it should be of the minimum amount required to restore order. The Headmaster should be informed as soon as possible after an incident.

For further information see:

- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures: Section 10

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

Name: Signature:

Title: Date :

Name: Signature:

Title: Date :

Name: Signature:

Title: Date :

Name: Signature:

Title: Date :

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