

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health and/or development, ensuring that children grow up in the provision of safe and effective care and optimising children's life chances.

This Child Protection Policy forms part of a suite of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school.

In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Purpose of a Child Protection Policy	To inform all staff, parents, volunteers and Board about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children. To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.
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. All school staff and volunteers will receive child protection training, so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow.
Intent 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. Establish and maintain an environment where school staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well being of a child. Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. Ensure that children who have been abused will be supported in line with a child protection plan, where deemed necessary. Include opportunities in the PSHE/Citizenship sessions for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

2. REQUIREMENTS

We will apply similar requirements to those developed over the last decade in UK schools, which places the following responsibilities on all schools:

Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions

To 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 and/or guidance.

All parents need to understand is the duty of the School to protect the registered students and the need to inform necessary authorities to safeguard a child

3. THE DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON

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

Name: _____ from _____ until _____

A Deputy DSP should be appointed to act in the absence/unavailability of the DSP for the same designation period as the DSP

The Deputy Designated Senior Person for Child Protection in our school is:

NAME: _____

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

Ensure that he/she receives training or information to keep his or her knowledge and skills up to date

Ensure that all staff who work with children participate in INSET to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively

Ensure that newly appointed staff receive a child protection induction

Ensure that procedures are clearly displayed throughout the school (see appendix 3)

Ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection

Ensure that the Principal is kept fully informed of any concerns

Develop contacts with other relevant agencies and services

Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns

Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns, including notifying Head of School/Principal of the absence of a child who is the subject of ongoing concern

Maintain records with actions taken persons involved; review dates; involvement of external agencies, etc.

Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support

Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential'

4. THE BOARD

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children in their establishment.

In particular, the Board must ensure:

- ✦ The appointment of one of its number to be the Designated Board Member (DBM) for Child Safeguarding: he/she will be responsible for providing updates on referrals to outside agencies for children on the Child Care Register
- ✦ Child protection policy and procedures are in place, annually reviewed
- ✦ Safe recruitment procedures: police references, CSR, etc.
- ✦ Ensure the appointment of a DSP who is a member of School Management Team
- ✦ That deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- ✦ The nominated Member of the Board (above) is to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Principal.

5. SCHOOL PROCEDURES

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the Designated Senior Person.

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. (Pro-forma is available for all staff and an electronic copy is held on the server).

The DSP will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the Head of School or Principal. If it is decided to make a referral this will be done and a discussion with the parents/guardians will be arranged, 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 – on our Child Care Register

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the Designated Senior Person will inform the receiving school, in a secure manner, of concerns.

6. WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

All staff and volunteers should be aware that the main categories of abuse are:

Physical Abuse	Emotional Abuse
Sexual Abuse	Neglect

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm – see **Appendix 1** for details.

Generally, in an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/guardians or other household members e.g. siblings or others outside of the home
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- (full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)
- Display insufficient sense of ‘boundaries’, lack stranger awareness
- Appear wary of adults and display ‘frozen watchfulness’

7. 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
- 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 immediately after the disclosure (see Record Keeping)
- Pass information to the DSP 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.

8. 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.

9. 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 using the 'Record of Concern' forms that are displayed in every classroom as well as in other spaces (appendix 2)

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.

10. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Whenever it is alleged that a member of staff/volunteer has:

Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child

Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child

Behaved toward a child in a way which indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the Principal.

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 Principal.

They should make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed on to the Principal.

If the concerns are about the Principal, then the Designated Board Member should be contacted.
The DBM at school is:

NAME:

Contact:

In the absence of the Board Member, a Head of School should be contacted. The Heads of School are:

NAME:

Contact:

NAME:

Contact:

In most cases it will be the Principal with the DSP will investigate the allegation itself and take written or detailed statements: he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to other authorities and/or inform parents and the designated Board Member.

All additions to the Child Care Register must be notified to the relevant Head of School and the Principal. The DSP with the Head of Schools and Principal will determine the range of 'need-to-know' personnel in School. The Child Care Register will be available for the designated Board Member to peruse.

Further information on these issues, which have been adopted by law, across England, can be found at:

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board

<http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>

Appendix 1 INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANT HARM

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Injuries not typical of accidental injury
- Frequent injuries even with apparently reasonable explanations
- Improbable or conflicting explanations for injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away
- Frequently absent from school

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Probably the most difficult type of abuse to recognise. An emotionally abused child is often withdrawn, introverted and depressed.
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)

- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food or clothes
- Continual self depreciation
- Air of detachment – ‘don’t care’ attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including over-eating or lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Demonstrate sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
- Wetting or other regressive behaviours e.g. thumb sucking
- Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities
- Be reluctant to undress for PE
- Become fearful of, or refuse to see, certain adults for no apparent reason; show dislike of a particular baby-sitter, relative or other adult
- Draw sexually explicit pictures
- Urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Soreness or bleeding in the throat
- Chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches
- Take over the parental role at home; seem old beyond their years
- Develop eating disorders, such as anorexia or bulimia

- ┌ Depression, suicidal thoughts
- ┌ Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
- ┌ Physical discomfort
- ┌ Use drugs or drink to excess
- ┌ Unexplained pregnancy
- ┌ Memory loss
- ┌ Frequent running away
- ┌ Restricted social activities
- ┌ Find excuses not to go home or to a particular place
- ┌ Have recurring nightmares/ afraid of dark
- ┌ Be unable to concentrate; seem to be in a world of their own
- ┌ Have a 'friend who has a problem' and then tell about the abuse of the friend
- ┌ Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant
- ┌ Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
- ┌ Outbursts of anger or irritability
- ┌ Unexplained sums of money
- ┌ Act in a sexually inappropriate/harmful or seductive way towards others
- ┌ Chronic running away
- ┌ Scavenging for food or clothes

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- ┌ Constant hunger
- ┌ Poor personal hygiene
- ┌ Inappropriate clothing, clothing in a poor state of repair
- ┌ Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- ┌ Untreated medical problems
- ┌ Low self-esteem
- ┌ Poor social relationships
- ┌ Compulsive stealing
- ┌ Constant tiredness
- ┌ Emaciation
- ┌ Destructive tendencies.
- ┌ Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)

Please note:

In addition to all these examples a child may disclose an experience in which he/she may have been harmed, or there may be any other cause to believe that a child may be suffering harm.

Appendix 2 RECORD OF CONCERN

Child's Name :			
Child's DOB :			
Male/Female :	Ethnic Origin :	Disability Y/N :	Religion :
Date and Time of Concern :			
Your Account of the Concern : (what was said, observed, reported and by whom)			
Additional Information : (your opinion, context of concern/disclosure)			
Your Response : (what did you do/say following the concern)			
Your Name :			
Your Signature :			
Your Position in School :			
Date and Time of this Recording :			
Action and Response of DSP / HT			
Name:Date:.....			

Appendix 3 CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS – WHAT TO DO?

If you have concerns about the safety or protection of any child or children, please speak to the Designated Senior Person (DSP) or, in his absence, the Deputy DSP (DDSP).

Please follow the following guidelines:

If you become concerned about because of information you are being told, or for any other reason (see appendix 1 of Child Protection Policy), allow the child to tell you what they wish to say and avoid asking any probing or investigative questions

If a child makes a specific disclosure, let him/her know that you may need to tell someone and that you cannot promise to keep a secret

Record your conversation as accurately as possible on a ‘record of concern’ form (available throughout the school). If you have any other records relating to the concern, attach these to the form

Do not make copies of the notes that you make. The original should be signed and dated by the person who recorded it and then given to the DSP or DDSP to be kept confidentially

Only discuss your concerns with the DSP or DDSP. It is the DSP’s/DDSP’s responsibility to decide who else may need to be informed. Do not discuss the situation with others inside or outside School.

If you are in *any* doubt about whether to talk to the DSP or DDSP, then it’s always advisable that you do

For further information:

Speak to the DSP or DDSP

Refer to the CHIS Child Protection Policy – available online

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board; Child Protection Procedures - available online <http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>