

LOSELEY FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with government publications: "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 1999, "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families" 2000, "What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused" 2003, *Circular 10/95 DfEE*, "*Safeguarding Children: Child Protection: Guidance about Child Protection Arrangements for the Education Service*" 2004, and the Surrey Area Child Protection Committee Procedures.

The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;
- provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to, approach adults if they are in difficulties believing they will be effectively listened to;
- raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children;
- emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff;
- develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse;
- develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services;

¹ Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary and supply staff, and volunteers working with children

- ensure that all adults within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

Procedures

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the Guidance for Safe working Practice for the protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings February 2005. We will ensure that:

- all members of the governing body understand and fulfil their responsibilities;
- we have a designated member of staff, our Child Protection Liaison Officer, who has undertaken the Two Day Child Protection Foundation Training delivered through the ACPC Training Manager and who undertakes other training provided by the Development Manager for Welfare and Protection;
- we have a member of staff who will act in the designated member of staff's absence who has also received the Two Day Child Protection Foundation Training;
- all members of staff are provided with opportunities to receive training in child protection to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse;
- all members of staff, volunteers, and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse;
- all parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the schools' Child Protection Policy, and reference to it in our introductory school pack;
- our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time;
- community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's child protection guidelines and procedures;
- we will ensure that our selection and recruitment of staff includes checks for their suitability with the Criminal Records Bureau;
- we will ensure that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies (List 99 for education staff);
- our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated;
- the name of the Designated member of staff for Child Protection, the Child Protection Liaison Officer, or CPLO will be clearly advertised in the school;
- all new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection policy, and the booklet "What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused", with the CPLO's name clearly displayed, as part of their induction into the school.

Responsibilities

The designated teacher, CPLO, is responsible for:

- referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Children's Services Assessment Team, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. A written record of the referral will be faxed to the Assessment Team;
- keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records;

- ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records;
- liaising with other agencies and professionals;
- ensuring that either they or the class teacher attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents;
- ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team;
- organising child protection training for all school staff;
- providing, with the Headteacher, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the CPLO, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register (anonymised).

Supporting Children

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

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.

Our school will support all pupils by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying;
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school;
- liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- notifying the Assessment Team as soon as there is a significant concern;
- providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. Further information is included in the Confidentiality Policy adopted by the school.

The Headteacher or CPLO will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.²

² Guidance about sharing information, pending the outcome of the Bichard Committee, can be found in the booklet "What to do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused" DoH 2003 www.doh.gov.uk

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 which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Services with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Duty Manager at the Assessment Team on this point.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the school 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 talk through their anxieties with the CPLO and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

All Staff should be aware of Surrey's Guidance on Behaviour Issues, and the school's own Behaviour Management policy.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.

The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Education Officer (LEO), or in his/her absence the Development Manager Welfare and Protection

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as above, without notifying the Headteacher first.

The school will follow the Surrey procedures for managing allegations against staff, in the CP Essential Guidance Manual a copy of which will be readily available in the school. Under no circumstances will we send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a Strategy Meeting³.

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will

³ The term Strategy Meeting covers any urgent formal strategy discussion which may take place by telephone between the police, social care, and education managers, requiring action prior to the first meeting.

seek the advice of the Local Education Officer (LEO) and Personnel Consultant in making this decision.

In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice as above.

We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context.

Whistleblowing

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

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak in the first instance, to the LEO.

Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out separately, and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained in the Positive Options technique.

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.

Bullying

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

Racist 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.

Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils 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;
- include across the curriculum, including PSHCE, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment, and for example in relation to internet use, and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Mr Chris Nourse
Headteacher
April 2009

Adopted by the Governing Body at the meeting dated 14 July 2009
To be reviewed: April 2010