

# SMALLWOOD MANOR PREPARATORY SCHOOL

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The governors and staff of Smallwood Manor Preparatory School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

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

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Vulnerable Children Services.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

### TYPES OF ABUSE:

**Neglect:** is 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 occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Physical abuse:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Emotional abuse:** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, 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, though it may occur alone.

## **PROCEDURES**

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Staffordshire County Council procedures, Vulnerable Children Services and the First Response Team.

- We have a Designated member of staff who undertakes regular training. This is Sue Edmonds, Head of Pre-Prep.
- We have two members of staff who will act in the Designated person's absence. These are Mike Harrison, Headmaster and Janet Kinsella, Head of Nursery.
- We have 1 member of the Governing Body who is responsible for Child Protection issues. This is Vivien Johnston-Smith.
- All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse. A case of abuse may be suspected from a variety of sources:
  - A pupil discloses to a member of staff personally.
  - From behaviour of, or marks on, the pupil (i.e. bruises, welts or lacerations).
  - A pupil is asked if everything is all right and he/she discloses abuse.
  - A pupil indicates through schoolwork that he/she is being abused.
  - A pupil tells a member of staff that he/she knows that another pupil is being abused.
  - A third party informs a member of staff that he/she knows a pupil is being abused.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. If a pupil starts to disclose abuse:
  - Staff should reassure the pupil that he/she is right to inform and is not to blame.
  - Staff must not promise confidentiality. They should explain that they have to make sure the pupil is safe and that they may need to ask other adults to help.
  - Staff must not interrogate the pupil or ask leading questions; let the pupil tell the member of staff what he/she wants to and no more; the pupil may have to disclose to a specialist later and too much detail may interfere with later investigations.
  - Staff must listen carefully and repeat the pupil's words. They should not take notes during disclosure. They should make a written report as soon as possible after the disclosure.

Staff must take the child seriously and try to remain calm and caring. They should not let their reactions show.

Staff must not attempt a detailed examination or remove a pupil's clothes to look further at an injury. Under no circumstances should photographs be taken – the child should only be examined by a doctor. If a pupil wants to show a member of staff ensure that a colleague of the same sex as the pupil is also present.

The pupil, when finished, should be made to feel secure and told what the member of staff proposes to do next. This pupil has chosen the member of staff as an adult to be trusted.

- Staff must inform the Designated Person immediately of what has happened.
- The Designated Person will contact the First Response Team where appropriate, in accordance with Staffordshire County Regulations. The First Response Team number is **0800 1313126**
- If the decision of the First Response Team is that they do not need to take further action then the matter will be left in the hands of the Child Protection Officer.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Designated Person is responsible for:

- Adhering to the Area Child Protection Committee, Vulnerable Childrens Services, First Response Team, the Staffordshire Local Education Authority and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
- 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.
- Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to the First Response Team.
- Ensuring that the nominated governor is informed when Child Protection issues arise.
- Ensuring that information about Child Protection concerns are passed on to the next school.

## **SUPPORTING CHILDREN**

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self blame.
- 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 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 First Response 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.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- The Headmaster or Designated Person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 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.

## **SUPPORTING STAFF**

- The designated children protection teacher will see all new teaching staff as part of their induction to explain the Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- 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 designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

## **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

- 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 Headmaster.
- The Headmaster on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LEA Lead Officer for Child Protection.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headmaster, the teacher will immediately inform the chair of Governors who will consult with the LEA's Lead Officer for Child Protection.
- The school will follow the school procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school.

## **WHITSTLEBLOWING**

- 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 attitude or actions of colleagues.

## **RESTRAINT**

- Our policy on restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy and acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- 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 policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **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 in the curriculum opportunities for PSHE, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Inception of Policy	January 2001
1 <sup>st</sup> Review	May 2003
2 <sup>nd</sup> Review and updated	March 2004
3 <sup>rd</sup> Review	November 2005
4 <sup>th</sup> Review	March 2007
5 <sup>th</sup> Review	January 2008

6<sup>th</sup> Review

January 2009