

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**SLINDON COLLEGE**

**THIS POLICY IS BASED ON THE WEST SUSSEX CHILD  
PROTECTION POLICY AND WAS ADAPTED AT OUR  
INSET DAY**

**AND ADOPTED IN**

**SEPTEMBER 2008**

**THE POLICY IS TO BE REVIEWED IN**

**SEPTEMBER 2010**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and Education Act 2002 and in line with government publications:
- ◆ "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2006,
  - ◆ "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,
  - ◆ DfES guidance "*Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruiting in Education*" and the
  - ◆ Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures (Produced by West Sussex, East Sussex, and Brighton & Hove Local Safeguarding Children Boards).
- 1.2 The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under section 157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils; 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.
- 1.3 We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 The aims of this policy are:
- ◆ To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
  - ◆ To 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.
  - ◆ 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.
  - ◆ To 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.
  - ◆ 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 Social Care.

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

## 2. PROCEDURES

2.1 Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the West Sussex LSCB Procedures. We will ensure that:

- ◆ All members of the governing body understand and fulfil their responsibilities.
- ◆ We have a nominated designated member of staff.
- ◆ Our designated member of staff, has undertaken the initial designated member of staff training and subsequent refresher courses every two years delivered through the Safeguarding Unit.
- ◆ We have a member of staff who will act in the designated member of staff's absence.
- ◆ All members of staff are provided with Child Protection Training every three years.
- ◆ All members of staff, volunteers and governors know:
  - ◆ The signs and symptoms of concern
  - ◆ How to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
  - ◆ What to do if they are concerned about a child
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ 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 meet the requirements as set down in Safer Recruitment guidance.
- ◆ We will ensure that at least one member of each interview panel has completed the safer recruitment course.

2.2 Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.

2.3 The name of the designed member of staff for Child Protection will be clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

2.4 All new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection policy.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The designated teacher, Designated Member of Staff is responsible for:
- ◆ Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Social Care Assessment team, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. A written record of the referral will be sent to the Assessment Team by the end of the working day the referral is made.
  - ◆ 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 or *residential key worker* attends Child Protection 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 that is subject to a child protection plan 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 Headmaster, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes and reviews of relevant policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DMS, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children subject to a child protection plan (anonymised).

### 4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.

## **5. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 5.2 The Headmaster will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- 5.5 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.

## **6. SUPPORTING STAFF**

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DMS and to seek further support as appropriate.

## **7. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

- 7.1 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.

- 7.2 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- 7.3 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headmaster.
- 7.4 The Headmaster on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 7.5 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headmaster, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as in 7.4. above, without notifying the Headmaster first.
- 7.6 Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headmaster, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headmaster will seek the advice of the LADO.
- 7.7 In the event of an allegation against the Headmaster, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice as in 7.6 above.

## **8. WHISTLEBLOWING**

- 8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 8.2 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 Headmaster and if the allegation is made against the Headmaster then the Chairman of Governors.

## **9. PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- 9.3 Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained from INSETS given by West Sussex Police.
- 9.4 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.

## 10. BULLYING

- 10.1 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.

## 11. PREVENTION

- 11.1 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.

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

## 12. HEALTH & SAFETY

- 12.1 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.

## CHILD ABUSE

Staff should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults or other young people), and take steps to reduce those risks. There is regular training to update staff.

Staff should also know what to do if they suspect that someone is being physically or sexually abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. The following key points give a guide on what to do and not to do.

The Headmaster is responsible for all matters of Child Protection and must be informed immediately if allegations of abuse are made.

If the allegations are against the Headmaster himself then you should inform the Chairman of the Governors.

Please refer to appendices attached.

1. Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. If you can, write brief notes on what they are telling you while they are speaking (these may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said) - and keep your original notes, however rough, and even if you wrote them on the back of something else (it's what you wrote at the time that may be important later - not a tidier and improved version you wrote up afterwards!). If you don't have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards.
3. Do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret - if you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it (see below). If asked, explain that if you are going to be told something very important that needs to be sorted out, you will need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
4. Don't ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. "did he do X to you?") - just ask "what do you want to tell me?", or "is there anything else you want to say?"
5. Immediately tell the Headmaster (unless he is himself suspected of abusing) - don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
6. Discuss with the Headmaster whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).

7. Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc. - social services and police staff are the people trained to do this - you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.
8. As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the Headmaster should refer the matter to the local social services department (helped by your notes). Follow their request about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations, and can advise you - that is their statutory job. [ If someone has made an accusation to you about the Headmaster, YOU should contact the social services department yourself and ask them what to do next].
9. Never think abuse is impossible in our school, and that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
10. Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than teachers, about abuse so it is important that senior boys and prefects know the procedures listed.

**If the abuse is said to be of a sexual nature then:**

- a) the boy should be believed and assured that he is not the guilty party.
- b) the boy must be allowed to disclose without prejudicial prompting. (Failure to adhere to this can jeopardise any further action contemplated by the police).
- c) stay with the boy, if you were the person to whom disclosure was first made, until a formal investigation takes place.

***Action to be taken by the Headmaster***

Suspected sexual abuse.

This will be determined by the status of the alleged abuser whether the abuser is a member of the boy's family, someone with whom he has regular contact, or is not a member of the boy's immediate or extended family.

He will be required to contact the Social Services Department (whose responsibility it is to contact the police) and, within 24 hours, report to them the action that has been taken.

He may have to inform the parents of the boy.

Suspected physical abuse.

The Headmaster must inform the School Medical Officer, or his own GP in the case of a day boy, as well as the boy's parents.

If the boy is taken to hospital then the Paediatric Department must be informed that the boy has an unexplained injury which could be the result of abuse.

**Definition:**

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy.

**Signs and Symptoms:**

The first indication of physical abuse is not necessarily the presence of a severe injury. Concern may be aroused by:

- bruises or marks on a child
- referrals made by a child, parents or friends
- observation of a child's behaviour
- indications that a family is under stress

If you see any signs and symptoms of physical abuse seek medical advice from a suitable qualified Paediatrician.

**Bruises:**

Children can sustain bruises accidentally, but any of the following bruises should be noted and Social Services informed:

bruising in or around the mouth (particularly small babies) to gum margin, the frenulum inside the upper lip or under the tongue.

Fingertip bruising, e.g. graspmarks on arms, chest or face, indicating having been gripped tightly or possibly violently shaken

variation in bruising colour, indicating differing timing of injuries

two simultaneous black eyes. Without bruising to the forehead are rarely accidental. A single black eye may be the result of an accident or abuse

bruising indicating belt marks, hand prints, or other edged implements

bruising or tears, around or behind the earlobe(s), indicating injury by pulling or twisting

repeated or multiple bruising on the head or other non-accidental injury sites. (see body map overleaf)

Bruises may disappear within 12 – 24 hours. Rapid action is essential.

Accidents produce one bruise on a single surface, usually on a bony protuberance, usually consistent with the explanation given.

It is unusual for babies under the age of 6 months to receive head injuries accidentally and back injuries are also unusual for a child who is unable to walk.

**Action:**

If you see any child with any sign or symptoms of physical abuse refer to Social Services.

**Bite Marks:**

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bites are oval or crescent shaped.

**Burns or Scalds:**

Burns with clear outlines are suspicious.

circular burns from cigarettes

linear burns from hot metal rods or electric fire element

burns of uniform depth over a large area

friction burns from being dragged across the floor

scalds producing a water line from immersion or pouring liquid

splash marks above the main burn area, caused by hot liquid being thrown

old scars indicating previous burns/scalds that did not receive medical treatment

**Fractures:**

Fractures cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone joint. It is difficult for parents to be unaware that a child has been hurt. Common non-accidental fractures occur to arm, legs and ribs (long bones).

Any fracture in a child under 1 year is suspicious

Any skull fracture in the first 3 years of life is suspicious

If the explanation given leads to the suspicion of non-accidental injury, consideration should be given to a full skeletal survey:

when injury or history suggests physical abuse -

in all children less than 18 months old with evidence of trauma

in older children with severe bruising

when history of previous skeletal injury is present

in children dying in unusual or suspicious circumstances

**Action:**

If you see any child with any symptoms of physical abuse refer to Social Services.

**Definition:**

Actual or likely sexual abuse/exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

Sexual abuse is often suspected based on a child's circumstances, behaviour, physical signs and symptoms or following a direct statement from the child.

Boys and girls of all ages are abused.

The abuse may carry on for several years before it comes to light.

Abusers use their authority over the child to gain co-operation.

**Physical Signs and Symptoms:**

Children who are known to be abused sexually may display some or none of the following indicators:

vaginal bleeding in pre-pubescent girls

genital lacerations or bruising

sexually transmitted diseases

abnormal dilation of the vagina, anus or urethra

itching, soreness, discharge or unexplained bleeding

faecal soiling or retention

pain on passing urinate and recurrent urinary tract infections

semen in the vagina, anus, external genitalia or on the clothes

pregnancy, especially in younger girls where the identity of the father is vague or secret

recurrent abdominal pain

difficulty in walking and sitting

**Behavioural Indicators:**

Sexual:

sexually provocative relationship with adults

displays more knowledge on sexual matters than is usual in children of comparable age

engages in inappropriate sexualised play or behaviour with other children

hints at sexual activity or secrets through words, play or drawing.

excessive preoccupation with sexual matters

occasionally requests information about contraception which may be indicative of a cry for help.

**General:**

lack of trust in, or marked fear of, familiar adults  
child psychiatric problems including onset of wetting or soiling, severe sleep disturbance,  
change in pattern of behaviour/ eating habits, social isolation and withdrawal  
behaviour indicating role reversal in the home, e.g. daughter taking over the mothering role  
inappropriate displays of physical contact between parents and their children  
learning difficulties, poor concentration, poor peer group relationships and inability to make friends  
school may be a haven for some sexually abused children, they arrive early and are reluctant to  
leave and often perform well  
marked reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for physical education  
truancy or running away from home  
self harm, self-mutilation and suicide attempts  
dependence on alcohol and drugs  
anti-social behaviour including promiscuity and involvement in prostitution

Most children are sexually abused by someone they know - either a family member or someone known to the family. These children may have been put under considerable pressure not to reveal what has been happening. Many children feel very guilty and responsible about their involvement. Any suspicion that a child is being sexually abused will be taken seriously. Suspicions will be shared with a senior colleague and/or advice sought from specialist personnel.

**Action:**

If you suspect or any child tells you they have been sexually abused refer to Social Services.