

## **Child Protection Policy**

Our Child Protection Policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy.

- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. All those working with our pupils will be CRB checked according to the most recent Government legislation.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with pupils in our care, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

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

We follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for children, schools and families to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person, the Headmaster – responsible for child protection. He has received appropriate training and support for this role. (re-trained every 2 years – Level III Child Protection 2009, policy reviewed annually). In addition the House Master and EYFS Coordinator are trained to Level III standard.
- Provide training for full time staff every two years. Part Time, non-teaching and voluntary are made aware of the basic arrangements in place (essentially that any concerns should be passed on to either the Headmaster or the nominated governor)
- Ensure that we have a nominated governor, Mr. Henry Bishop – responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person.

- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection, by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file and in a locked location.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Any allegations made against volunteers or staff should be directed to the Headmaster and any allegations made against the Headmaster should be referred to the nominated governor.
- The Governors will review this policy annually and check to make sure that all duties are being carried out effectively
- Offer of employment will be withdrawn from anyone who it feels is inappropriate for the role of working with children. In addition it will report within one month to the relevant authorities anyone released from their duties for associated reasons.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the child through:

- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued as an individual.
- The content of the curriculum, with teachers sensitive to the background of the child and any reaction to curriculum matters this may raise.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that they are valued and not blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, when a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Staff are strongly advised to remain cautious at all times and not to place themselves potentially comprising situations. Doors should be left open when dealing with a child alone and taking photographs using a mobile phone, e-mailing or texting children are all ill

advised. Children or past pupils should not be invited as ‘friends’ on personal networking sites such as Facebook.

## **PROCEDURES**

Members of staff should be alert for signs of abuse, and if they become concerned about the welfare of a pupil, should follow the procedure here laid down.

1. If you have cause to fear for the immediate safety of a child, bring the matter personally and at once to the Headmaster.
2. In any event, the matter is to be reported to the Headmaster who is the designated member of staff responsible for the co-ordination of action, as required by the DfCSF. You may, of course, wish to share your concern with a senior colleague before bringing the matter to the Headmaster’s attention; you are fully entitled to do so.
3. In reviewing the situation with the Headmaster, you will need to draw up a written note of reasons for concern.
4. If it is deemed appropriate, the matter will be reported to the Educational Welfare Service Divisional Manager, Hampshire [with a note covering reasons for concern, action taken and background information – names and addresses, etc.] The Divisional Manager will, in turn, decide if a referral to the local Social Services Department is appropriate, and they will take up the matter from this point.
5. Relevant staff will be informed of any pupil who is on the Child Protection Register.

Please note that there is no automatic passing on – a careful review will take place at each stage indicated above, and while no one will wish to jump to conclusions, nor should they be inhibited from reporting genuine concerns at an early stage.

*A useful guide document issued by Oxford Social Services*

### ***CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD ABUSE.***

#### ***TEN KEY POINTS TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT, OR ARE TOLD, OF ABUSE.***

*Adults looking after children or young people in schools (or in residential establishments or youth organisations), should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults or other young people) and take steps to reduce those risks.*

*Adults (staff or volunteers) in charge of children or young people should 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:*

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 of 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 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!). Boundary Oak's advice is to use pen and not pencil. 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 person in charge of the school or group (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abusing) – don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told.*
  - 6. Discuss with the person in charge 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 person in charge should refer the matter to the local social services department (helped by your notes). Follow their requests 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 adult in charge of the group, YOU should contact the local social services department yourself, and ask them what to do next.]*
  - 9. Never think abuse is impossible in your school or group, or 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 staff or other adults, about abuse – make sure that your senior young people know the points on this sheet as well as the responsible adults (e.g. prefect, cadet NCOs, young people leading activities for others).*

*These points are no substitute for the proper selection and training of adults trusted to look after children and young people, or for schools having their own clear "child protection" procedures for their particular setting, which should be agreed by the local Area Child Protection Committee (contactable through the headquarters of the local Social Services Department).*

*Roger Morgan,  
Chief Inspector Oxfordshire Social Services Department*

Year 8 pupils will receive appropriate advice and training with regards to the relaying on of information to the Headmaster should they be privy to information from a younger pupil. The School does not however see them as Child Protection Officers but it is accepted that younger children may well talk to them about concerns whilst carrying out their role as a 'Buddy' or Form Prefect.

## **A useful guide document issued by Norfolk Education Department**

### **SIGNS and SYMPTOMS of ABUSE**

#### ***Possible signs of PHYSICAL ABUSE***

- Unexplained injuries or burns;
- Refusal to discuss injuries;
- Untreated injuries or lingering illnesses not attended to;
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive;
- Shrinking from physical contact;
- Fear of undressing;
- Aggression/bullying;
- Running away;
- Deterioration in work;
- Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries;
- Bruises and finger marks;
- Improbable explanation for injuries;
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted;
- Fear of medical help;
- Over compliant behaviour
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation.

#### ***Possible signs of EMOTIONAL ABUSE***

- Fear of new situation;
- Self-harm or mutilation;
- Air of detachment – “don’t care” attitude;
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends;
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour;
- Eating problems;
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging;
- “Neurotic” behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb sucking;

#### ***Possible signs of NEGLECT***

- Constant hunger;
- Inappropriate clothing;
- Untreated medical problems;
- Poor social relationships;
- Constant tiredness
- Depression, withdrawal;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school;
- Low self-esteem;

- Compulsive stealing/scrounging.

### ***Possible signs of SEXUAL ABUSE***

- Bruises, scratches or bite marks on the body;
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions;
- Pregnancy;
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – e.g. shown in drawings, vocabulary, games, etc.;
- Frequent public masturbation;
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity;
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places;
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness;
- Withdrawal from friends.

### ***Possible signs in OLDER CHILDREN***

- Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour;
- Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts;
- Eating disorders;
- Over-compliant behaviour;
- Unexplained gifts of money;
- Changes in behaviour;
- Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness;
- Sleep disturbances;
- Depression.

### **HIGH CRITICISM – LOW WARMTH SITUATIONS**

These lists may indicate that a child is being abused. However, in themselves they are not evidence of abuse, but they may suggest abuse if a child exhibits several of them or if a pattern emerges. Remember that there can be other explanations for a child showing signs of behaving in such bad ways.

- Any deficiency in this policy should be brought to the headmaster's attention so that it can be rectified immediately.

### **Contact Numbers:**

- Hampshire's Children's Services - 0845 600 4555
- Fareham Social Services – 0845 603 5620
- [Hampshire Police](#) - 0845 045 4545
- [NSPCC](#) Child Protection line - 0808 800 5000
- [Childline](#) - 0800 1111
- Out of hours Emergency Services - 0845 600 4555

This policy was last reviewed and amended by the Headmaster after consultation with the academic staff on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011. The next scheduled review date will be September 2012.