

## **Child Protection- A Policy for Lytchett Minster School**

### **Principles**

- 1.0 This school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care.
- 1.1 An agreed definition of safeguarding is: 'All agencies take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised. Where there are concerns, all agencies take action to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies' - Joint Chief Inspectors' report 2002.
- 1.2 Safeguarding encompasses many aspects of school life, wherever a child's welfare might be compromised; child protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding.
- 1.3 Promoting welfare involves 'creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life chances in adulthood' – Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (Government guidance 2000)
- 1.4 The Governing Body will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at this school.
- 1.5 All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their:
  - race, religion, first language or ethnicity
  - gender or sexuality
  - age
  - health or disability
  - political or immigration status
- 1.6 This school follows the Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures – December 2006, adopted by Dorset Local Authority (LA), referenced in the 'Yellow File' and updated regularly.
- 1.7 Staff, volunteers and governors in this school are committed to fostering an ethos which:
  - encourages and supports parents/carers and works in partnership with them;
  - listens to and values pupils;
  - ensures all staff and volunteers are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse, know the correct procedure for referring concerns or allegations and receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out these requirements;
  - maintains a safe school environment for all pupils;
  - exercises their duty to work in partnership with other agencies and to share information with them in accordance with legislation (Children Act 2004)
- 1.8 We recognise that school staff and volunteers, because of their contact with and knowledge of the children or young people in their care, are well placed to identify abuse and offer support.

- 1.9 Our recruitment and selection procedure includes all checks on staff suitability to have contact with children (including Criminal Records Bureau enhanced checks) as recommended by the LA and in accordance with current legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings – DfES 2006). The same recruitment procedures will be adopted for individuals who volunteer in school on a regular basis.
- 1.10 Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made by children will always be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
- 1.11 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation; no action will be taken knowingly which might undermine a criminal investigation. Investigating agencies are Children's Services Social Care and the Police.

### **Procedures for Referral / Principles for Intervention to Protect Children**

- 2.0 All action is taken in line with the following guidance:
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures & Guidance
  - DfES Guidance (2006) – Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 – Guidance published by the Department of Health
  - What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance – DfES 31553
- 2.1.1 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to this school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the designated senior person for child protection or deputy.

2.2

#### **DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON FOR CHILD PROTECTION:**

MR D. RUSTON (DEPUTY HEADTEACHER – COMMUNITY)

#### **DEPUTY SP:**

MS S HADDRELL (DEPUTY HEAD OF HOUSE)

The name of the designated senior person(s) for child protection is displayed in the main entrance hall/foyer.

- 2.2 If appropriate, the designated senior person for child protection will inform the Child Care Assessment Team Duty Officer at the local (to the child's home address) office, unless the child about whom there are concerns already has an allocated social worker, in which case this person will be contacted without delay.

#### **Local Office Contacts:**

- Dorchester                    01305 251414
- Bridport                      01308 422234
- Sturminster Newton 01258 472652
- Weymouth                  01305 760139
- Portland                      01305 760139

- Purbeck 01929 553456
- Ferndown 01202 877445
- Christchurch 01202 474106

- 2.3 Telephone referrals to Children's Services Social Care local offices should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours, using the inter-agency referral form.
- 2.4 In general, school staff will discuss their concerns with parents/carers and advise them of any referrals to Children's Services Social Care, unless it is considered that to do so will place the child at risk of harm. Advice will be taken from the investigating agencies if there is any doubt.
- 2.5 The designated senior person for child protection will assist the investigating agencies to make enquiries into concerns of child welfare. This will include ensuring this school is represented at Child Protection Conferences and that information about the child is provided as required.
- 2.6 The designated senior person for child protection will be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with other agencies and support services over child protection and other safeguarding issues.
- 2.7 Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual pupils/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.
- 2.8 We understand that concerns about significant harm may arise about children who already have an allocated social worker and we will pass on such concerns without delay.
- 2.9 Every member of staff has an individual responsibility for child protection. Where there is concern about a child's welfare and the designated senior person is not available, or it is felt that he/she is not taking the concerns seriously, another person in the school management team should refer to the Children's Services Social Care local office.

### **Concerns About Staff Behaviour Towards Children**

- 3.0 Local procedures plus the Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, Appendix 5: Procedures for Managing Allegations against People who Work with Children' and DfES Guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, Chapter 5: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff' will be followed.
- 3.1 All concerns/allegations about adults who work in our school will be taken seriously and will be dealt with by the Headteacher. He will contact the Officer for Child Protection (who is the LA Designated Officer (LADO) for schools) for consultation on 01305 225057. The LADO will record the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken, which could include a referral to investigating agencies. (If the LADO is not available, there should be no delay in taking advice or referring to Children's Services Social Care.) Due recognition will be paid to the stress caused by such an allegation and appropriate skills deployed to balance the needs of the child and support for the member of staff. However, the needs of the child must take precedence (Children Act 1989, Section 1 (1)(b)).

- 3.2 Where the allegation is against the Headteacher, the LADO should be contacted by the Chair of Governors for advice on how to proceed.
- 3.3 In order to minimise the risk of harm to children and of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with pupils, governors should ensure, through the Headteacher, that all staff are aware of safe working practice and follow guidelines on the use of control and physical restraint.

### **Supporting Children**

- 4.0 We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself or find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.
- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 Our school will support all pupils by:
- encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
  - promoting a caring, safe and positive environment
  - liaising and working together with all other agencies
  - ensuring there is a named member of staff for 'Looked After' children

### **Record Keeping**

- 5.0 Any member of staff or volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible, noting what was seen or said (recording the pupil's own words as far as possible) putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. Information should be recorded in non-judgmental, non-emotive terms. All records must be dated and signed.
- 5.1 All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.
- 5.2 All records relating to child protection concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential. They do not form part of the pupil's educational records and are not required to be disclosed to parents/carers. Any requests from parents'/carers' solicitors to have records disclosed to them should be passed to one of the county solicitors for advice.
- 5.3 Files relating to concerns about pupils will include a chronology of incidents and subsequent actions/outcomes.
- 5.4 Staff must ensure that they monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of pupils on the Child Protection Register and that they provide information as required by the social worker, the LA Officer for Child Protection and the Education Social Work and Attendance Service. There should be

agreement via the protection plan about at what point the social worker or another member of his/her team will be informed if a child on the Child Protection Register is absent from school

- 5.5 If a child moves from one school to another the designated senior person for child protection should inform the receiving school immediately by telephone that child protection records exist. The original records must be passed on either by hand or sent by recorded delivery. In such cases it would be good practice to retain duplicate records, as recommended by a recent serious case review (conducted when a child dies, and abuse or neglect are known or suspected). These duplicate records should be kept securely for 10 years.
- 5.6 It is recommended that a child's records are kept for 10 years after he/she leaves compulsory education.

### **Parental Involvement**

- 6.0 This school is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all pupils.
- 6.1 Parents/carers will be made aware of the school's child protection policy via the school prospectus and initial meetings with parents of new pupils.
- ***See Appendix for suggested statement for inclusion in prospectus.***
- 6.2 As previously stated, where possible, concerns about children should be discussed with parents/carers in the first instance and the designated senior person should advise of the need to make referrals to the Children's Services Social Care local office, unless to do so would place the pupil at increased risk of significant harm.

### **Training**

- 7.0 Governors recognise the importance of child protection training for the designated senior person and for all other staff and volunteers in the school.
- 7.1 The designated senior person will be encouraged to attend training events organised by the LA or the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This person must have inter-agency training and receive 'refresher' training at least every two years.
- 7.2 Child protection must be part of induction training for all new staff and volunteers. Staff who do not have lead responsibility for child protection must have 'refresher' training at least every three years.

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

- 8.0 Governors will ensure that the school has identified a designated senior person for child protection, and deputies, and consider a nominated governor for safeguarding.
- 8.1 The nominated governor for safeguarding, in liaison with the designated senior person, will ensure that the school has an effective child protection policy and clear procedures in place, and that these are

known to all members of staff (including supply staff) and volunteers. Newly appointed staff should read copies of the policy and procedures as part of their induction training.

- 8.2 The governors will receive an annual report on changes to the child protection policy or procedures; training undertaken by the designated senior person, other staff, volunteers and governors; the number of child protection incidents/cases (without detail or name); and how safeguarding issues are addressed through the curriculum.
- 8.3 The governors will review and up-date (if appropriate) the child protection policy on an annual basis and ensure a copy is sent to the designated LA officer.
- 8.4 As previously stated, the Chair of Governors will take action, according to agreed procedures, where there are allegations against the Headteacher.

### **The Curriculum and Safeguarding in Relation to Other School Policies**

- 9.0 The governors place importance on the curriculum in the safeguarding of children. They aim to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives:
- developing pupil self-esteem
  - developing communication skills
  - informing about all aspects of risk
  - developing strategies for self-protection
  - developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults
  - developing non-abusive behaviour and respect between pupils and adults
- 9.1 This child protection policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on attendance, complaints, curriculum, discipline (including anti-bullying), health and safety, race equality, risk assessments, sex education, special educational needs, staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs**

- 10.0 Governors recognise that children with special educational needs may be especially vulnerable to abuse and expect staff to take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect.
- 10.1 Staff responsible for any intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and ensure the child's dignity is preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There will be close partnership with parents/carers.

### **Whistle blowing**

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

- 11.1 All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the actions of colleagues. Any such concerns should be raised with the Headteacher or LA Designated Officer.

### **Extended Schools and Before and After School Activities**

- 12.0 Where the governing body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply.
- 12.1 Where services or activities are provided by another body, using the school as a venue, the governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters as appropriate.

### **Students in Long Term Workplace Placements**

- 13.0 We recognise that students in long term workplace settings may be more vulnerable to harm so this school has policies and procedures in place to protect them, in accordance with 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, Annex A: Pupils/Students in Workplace Placements' (DfES 2006)
- 13.1 School staff who arrange, vet or monitor work placements should have had training in child protection.

(Further information on legislation and guidance can be found at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection/guidance.htm](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection/guidance.htm) )

**This policy was adopted by the Governing Body in June 2011**

### **Appendix : Suggested statement for inclusion in school prospectus**

*Our first priority is your child's welfare and we will usually discuss any concerns we might have about your child with you. There might be occasions, however, when we have to provide information to or consult other agencies such as Children's Services Social Care before we contact you. Our responsibility to do so is determined by Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures, 2006. If you want to know more about these procedures, please speak to the Headteacher.*