

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY** **FOR SCHOOLS**

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR Parkside Community College**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Parkside Community College fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at the school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the appropriate agency, normally the appropriate Child and Family Team (Social Services).

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school

**There are four main elements to our policy:**

**PREVENTION** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos

**PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

**SUPPORT TO PUPILS** who may have been abused.

### **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school including community education staff and governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

#### **1 PREVENTION**

- 1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.
- 1.2 The school will therefore:
  - 1.2.1 establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;

- 1.2.2 ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- 1.2.3 include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and information about who to turn for help;
- 1.2.4 Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.

*(Note: Advice and resources (and on the teaching of personal safety skills at KS3 and 4) is available from the PSHE service or from the Education Child Protection Service).*

## **2 PROCEDURES**

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by the Cambridgeshire Area Child Protection Committee “Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Need in Cambridgeshire”, also known as the “Blue Book” and also the Education Child Protection Procedures which is the companion document to the Blue Book for all education staff.

### **2.2 The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection**

The school will:

- 2.2.1 ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course, accredited by the Area Child Protection Committee;
- 2.2.2 ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance;
- 2.2.3 recognise the importance of the role of the designated teacher and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties;
- 2.2.4 ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available;
- 2.2.5 ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases.

### **2.3 The Role of Governors and School Staff**

The school will:

- 2.3.1 ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:
  - the name of the designated person and her/his role;

- that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the Blue Book;
- where the Blue book containing Education Child Protection Procedures is located;

2.3.2 provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:

- their personal responsibility,
- the Blue Book procedures,
- the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
- how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse

2.3.3 ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

## 2.4 **Liaison with Other Agencies**

The school will:

2.4.1 work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences;

2.4.2 notify the local Social Services team if:

- it should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register (whether fixed term or permanently);
- there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend); or as agreed as part of any child protection or core group plan.

## 2.5 **Record Keeping**

The school will:

2.5.1 keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately;

2.5.2 ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;

2.5.3 ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools.

## 2.6 Confidentiality and information sharing

2.6.1 Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols \* are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or outside agency as required.

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

2.6.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

2.6.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

## 2.7 Communication with Parents

The school will:

2.7.1 undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this. (Further guidance on this can be found in the Education Child Protection Procedures section 4.27)

2.7.2 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 brochure (See section 4.40 of the Education Child Protection Procedures for a model wording of text).

## 3 SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK

3.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

3.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

3.3 We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

3.4 The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

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\* The ACPC Guidance on the Sharing of Information on Children in Need and in Need of Protection can be accessed from the ACPC website at [cambacpc.org.uk](http://cambacpc.org.uk)

- 3.4.1 the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see section 2);
- 3.4.2 the school ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2);
- 3.4.3 the school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- 3.4.4 liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service;
- 3.4.5 a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so;
- 3.4.6 recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;
- 3.4.7 vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Services **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**
- 3.5 When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Review Manager will also be informed. We will follow the procedures for children that 'Missing Children'.

### 3.6 **Drug Use and Child Protection**

- 3.6.1 The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause;

- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- to believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.

### 3.6.2 **Children of Drug Using Parents**

3.6.3 Further enquiries and or further action will be taken when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection);
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment exists which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

#### **4 PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

- 4.1 The school will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to Circular DfES/0278/2002 Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young People in the Education Service.
- 4.2 The school will consult with the designated LEA Officer for Child Protection in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the Education Child Protection Procedures, Blue Book and the school's Personnel Manual (i.e. the Manual produced by EPM Ltd for subscribing schools).
- 4.3 The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- 4.4 The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents as advised by the Local Authority's Code of Conduct.
- 4.5 For secondary schools only ...  
The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of position of trust).

#### **5 OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

##### **5.1 Physical Intervention**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a

last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury themselves, another person or property

## 5.2 **Bullying**

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## 5.3 **Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## 5.4 **Health and Safety**

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body. It 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.

## 5.5 **Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and or emotional and behavioural problems are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

*(Note: It will be important that the policy of Special Schools and mainstream schools with units recognise the vulnerability of children with SEN, particularly the needs of those with communication difficulties)*

# 6 **GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES**

6.1 The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues;
- ensure an annual report is made to the governing body, and copied to the Education Child Protection Service, on child

protection matters to include changes affecting CP policy and procedures , child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum;

- ensure that this policy is annually reviewed, updated and copied to the Education Child Protection Service.

## 6.2 Extended Schools and Before and After School Activities

6.2.1. If the governing body provides extended school facilities or before or after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

6.2.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body the governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

This policy was ratified at a meeting of  
the Full Governing Body on ...6<sup>th</sup> July 2005.....

and will be reviewed in .....Summer term 2008.....

Signed by the Headteacher/Chair of Governors.....

## **Appendix A**

### **Standards For Effective Child Protection Practice In Schools**

*Child protection matters are receiving an increased priority in Ofsted inspections. The following standards may assist schools in evaluating their practice*

In best practice, schools:

- 1 have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- 2 provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
- 3 work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
- 4 are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
- 5 monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, *in a secure place*, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
- 6 provide and support child protection training regularly to school staff every three years and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose;
- 7 contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
- 8 use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account of the guidance for Governors on sex and relationship education in circular 5/94;

- 9 provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the schools approach to bullying;
- 10 have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the schools position on this issue and who they can contact for support;
- 11 take particular care that pupils with SEN in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills;
- 12 have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set down in circular DFES/0027/2004 Safeguarding Children in Education;
- 13 have a written whole school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by schools staff and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards;
- 14 the school will ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LEA for monitoring purposes.