

# **SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER WORKING PRACTICE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND STAFF**

## **Harlington Upper School**

This policy was adopted in November 2009  
This policy will be reviewed September 2010

### **Principles**

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 gives maintained schools a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, and have due regard to the guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES 2007'. The Children Act 2004, through the Stay Safe outcome of the Every Child Matters Change for Children programme, places a duty on schools to safeguard and promote the well-being of pupils. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of pupils are competent, confident and safe to do so.

Harlington Upper School recognises that it has a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will carry out this duty through teaching and learning, pastoral care and extended school activities. All members of the school community (including volunteers and governors) will establish and maintain a safe and stimulating environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk to adults they can trust and are listened to. Any person in charge of, or working with pupils in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care.

Through training, all staff (teaching and non-teaching) will be able to recognise the signs of abuse and understand their responsibilities when a child may be at risk of harm. Training of all staff (except the designated member of staff) will be updated every three years. Staff will also receive training in relation to appropriate conduct and how allegations against staff must be dealt with. It is recognised that tensions and misunderstandings can occur and that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced or may arise from differing perspectives of the same event, and will inevitably be distressing and difficult for all concerned. If professional judgements are made in situations which may contravene guidance given, staff should advise a senior colleague as soon as possible.

The school will ensure that it provides written referrals on the correct form (CAF) and recognises the importance of attendance at all meetings called when there is a concern regarding the safeguarding of a pupil.

### **Staff recruitment**

In line with the guidance 'Safer Recruitment', the Headteacher and Chair of Governors have completed Safer Recruitment training. All staff including volunteers who have access to children in our school have been carefully selected and screened and all have had an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check prior to commencing work. All details of all appointments/checks are held in a central record.

### **Designated member of staff**

The designated senior member of staff for safeguarding in this school is:

Mrs Linda Skinner - Deputy Headteacher
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In her absence/to assist:

Mrs Valerie Purnell - Deputy Headteacher; Mrs Tara Batt-Corcoran - Pastoral Manager.
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Our designated member of staff is fully trained and receives updated training at least every 2 years. All staff are responsible for filling in written concerns sheets which are collated onto chronology forms by the designated person who ensures these confidential records are kept securely. It is the responsibility of the designated member of staff to have discussions with Social Care when concerns arise regarding the safety of a pupil in this school. All such pupils are closely monitored, including attendance, and where extra concerns arise these are passed on to the appropriate agencies. Advice and support are offered to other members of staff dealing with a pupil for whom there are concerns.

### **Designated Governor**

Our school has a designated safeguarding governor who will act as the link person between the governing body and the designated officer. The governor will review safeguarding procedures/practices including access to training through termly meetings with the safeguarding officer. The governors will ensure that sufficient time is given to carry out the duties including accessing training. Where safeguarding concerns arise regarding a member of staff, the governor will liaise with the Chair of Governors.

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

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. All staff who support these pupils will be especially aware of the need for vigilance for signs of abuse.

### **Parents**

This school believes in working closely with parents and in most cases where we have a concern about a pupil, the parents will be informed. In our school prospectus we have set out our obligations regarding potential harm to pupils so parents can have an understanding of the responsibility placed on this school.

### **Allegations against a member of staff**

Where there is a concern that a member of staff may have behaved inappropriately the Headteacher will discuss the matter with the Allegations Manager (Local Authority Designated Officer – LADO) as laid down in the Bedfordshire LSCB procedures and the Chair of Governors will be informed. However, where the allegation made concerns the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will liaise with the Allegations Manager. The school will not attempt to investigate unless authorised to do so.

### **Policies**

This policy should link to other school policies on:

PSHE

Health and Safety

Physical Intervention

Behaviour and Attendance

Sex and Relationships Education

Racist Incidents

Bullying including internet/mobile

Confidentiality

Children Missing Education

Allegations against staff

### **Legislation relating to this policy:**

Children Act 1989, 2004

Education Act 1996, 2002 (Section 175)

School Standards and Framework Act 1998  
Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DfES 2007

### **Manuals kept in school**

Bedfordshire Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2006  
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2006  
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006  
Central Bedfordshire Personnel Handbook

### **School Procedures**

- If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform Linda Skinner.
- Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations, using appendix 1.
- Linda Skinner will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the Social Services Department. If it is decided to make a referral to Social Services this may be done without prior discussion with the parents.
- If a referral is made to Social Services, Linda Skinner will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the Social Worker dealing with the case within 48 hours.
- Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register. Social Services will be notified of any unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil on the Child Protection Register.
- If a pupil who is known to be on the Child Protection Register changes school, Linda Skinner will inform the Social Worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.
- Safe recruitment practices are always followed and new members of staff including supply staff will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction.

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 pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- 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 they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Provision of additional support mechanisms in school, such as an older peer mentor, counselling services or direct support from a member of the pastoral support or learning support teams.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Education Psychology Service.

## **When to be concerned**

If a child:

Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities.

- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).
- Confused or conflicting explanations are given on how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.
- Discloses that they are to be forced to marry (under no circumstances should such a disclosure be discussed with parents or other family members).

## **Dealing with a disclosure**

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Social Services.
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions.
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions.
- Not criticise the perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

## **Record Keeping**

When a pupil has disclosed the member of staff should:

- Make some brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Indicate on the diagram, available from Linda Skinner, the position of any bruising or other injury.
- Record statements and observations, rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- Written records of referrals or concerns must be kept secure, separate from the main pupil file, in a locked location.

## **Support**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff concerned should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with Linda Skinner.

## **Allegations Against School Staff**

Whilst school staff are uniquely placed to detect signs and indicators of child abuse, they are themselves particularly vulnerable to malicious or misplaced allegations made by pupils, deliberately or innocently, arising from normal and proper association with them in school or elsewhere. When an allegation is made against any member of staff in the school, the matter must be referred immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer. All other allegations regarding conduct of adults working within the school will be dealt with through the School's complaints/disciplinary procedure.

When a child makes an allegation of abuse by a member of staff, the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and deal with it according to the procedures set out above and must immediately inform the Headteacher. If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the matter must be referred to the Chair of Governors.

## **Safe Recruitment Practices**

The school follows published guidance on the safe recruitment of new staff and supply staff.

Supply agencies are specifically asked to confirm that appropriate checks have been carried out on individuals who work in the school on a temporary basis.

The Headteacher has undertaken the on-line safeguarding children safe recruitment training via the NCSL.

Recruitment advertising, applicant's information and the person specification will provide a prominent safeguarding statement and information.

The invitation to interview will include a statement that the interview will include an assessment of the candidate's suitability to work with children.

Interview questions will include an assessment of the candidate's motivation to work with children and young people.

No member of staff will be allowed to begin work in the school until appropriate police and background checks have been completed.

Visiting speakers and other professionals who come into school to work with young people will not be allowed to work alone with them unless confirmation is received that background checks have been suitably completed.

Any child protection training or update in school will include all staff, not only teachers.

Staff are expected to act as role models and are actively encouraged to report any incident of inappropriate behaviour by a colleague.

Staff training days will be used to explore what staff consider acceptable and unacceptable behaviour – this will include bullying, ridicule, the management of difficult behaviour and the school's response to physical abuse. Clear procedures and guidelines will be set out so that appropriate conduct is embedded in the daily practice of staff and staff feel able to raise concerns where they feel this is not the case.

All newly appointed staff are given a pack of relevant policies including the child protection policy to read and must sign to confirm that they have read and understood these policies.

## DEALING WITH A CHILD PROTECTION ALLEGATION



