

Oakley Lower School

Child Protection Policy

Rationale

We believe that a caring school promotes the welfare, health, safety and guidance of every child.

Aim

Our aim is to create a warm, supportive environment in which:-

- Children feel safe and secure.
- A senior member of staff has been designated to follow the LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008.
- Each member of staff is aware of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Staff are knowledgeable and take part in in-service training courses which lead to a greater understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse.
- The prevention of child abuse is encouraged through teaching which builds awareness of the dangers of abuse.
- Liaison with other agencies involved in the protection of children is encouraged.

Policy

- The head teacher has been designated to have responsibility for coordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies. Miss Burraway is the designated teacher for child protection.
- All staff are familiar with child protection procedures and all cases of potential child abuse are reported immediately to the head teacher and designated teacher who is responsible for referring suspected child abuse cases to the Social Care.
- The LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008 are displayed in the Staff Room and are accessible to all staff.
- The designated Governor is nominated to have responsibility for child protection matters. This includes monitoring the effectiveness and implementation of the child protection policy, as well as information about any policy changes. Governors also receive information about training undertaken by the designated teacher and other staff and the number of incidents in school (without names or details) and the place of child protection in the curriculum.
- Adults working with children in our school are CRB checked.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection procedures as part of their induction.

The following whole school approach is encouraged:

- Promoting an ethos in which children's self esteem is enhanced and where they feel secure, with their viewpoints valued, and where they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are experiencing difficulties.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and recognition that they may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive, helpful measure.

- Ensuring vigilance in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, and having clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to the school's designated teacher; staff members have an awareness of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to relevant professionals, such as social workers.
- Monitoring children who have been identified as at risk, keeping clear records of such children's progress (in a locked filing cabinet), maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences, as appropriate.
- Contributing to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Using the curriculum to raise children's awareness and building confidence so that children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Parents are made aware of the Child Protection policy through the School Prospectus and on the website.

Responsibilities

The designated member of staff is responsible for:

- Carrying out child protection procedures in accordance with the LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008 and Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DCSF 2007.
- Collating written records of concern 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.
- Monitoring the attendance of any pupil currently considered a Child In Need or with a Child Protection Plan and referring concerns when appropriate to the Education Welfare Service in the first instance. Where concerns remain the social worker for the family will be informed.
- Ensuring that all school staff teaching and non-teaching are trained and receive refresher training every three years.
- Ensuring that the LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008 is displayed in the Staff Room and is accessible to all staff.
- Passing on any child protection records/concerns to the receiving school when a child leaves.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Nominating a governor to have responsibility for child protection who receives training.
- Ensuring child protection is a standing item in the agenda for Governors' meetings.
- Reviewing the policies and procedures annually.
- Remedying any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention, without delay.
- Ensuring that the Chair liaises with the LA/partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the head teacher.

The Children's Act

The Children's Act 2004 places a duty on children's services to establish local boards and sets out agencies that will be the 'Board partners' on the Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The Act also places a duty for the authority and Board partners to cooperate with each other.

Procedures to be used for establishing who has Parental Responsibility.

The head teacher should be aware of a child's family history to establish who has parental responsibility for them. Home visits are made to all children's families before admission to the Early Years classes in September. During this time members of staff will try to establish who has Parental Responsibility for the child. The parents will be assured that confidentiality will be maintained. Information will be placed in the child's records which are kept in files in the Secretary's Office. Every attempt will be made to enable both parents to be given information concerning their child's educational progress during the course of the child's time at Oakley Lower.

In the event of a disputed case of parental responsibility all members of staff including lunchtime supervisors/LSAs will be expected to refer any concerns/incidents to the head or assistant head teacher in her absence.

The head/assistant head will make it clear that the school will not be used as an access point. The parent will need to provide legal documentation to prove their right of access or to prove that a parent has no right of access.

No child will be allowed off the premises in the company of an adult unknown to the school unless:

- a) we have been instructed by those with parental responsibility or
- b) we have first contacted those who have parental responsibility.

Oakley Lower School will aim to ensure that:

- School records accurately reflect the home situation.
- Consent will be obtained for school trips, medical attention etc. from those with parental responsibility.
- Those with parental responsibility have the right to see a child's school report. Estranged parents are invited to add their name to the school's mailing list and are requested to provide stamped addressed envelopes.
- If a child is hurt in an accident, contact must be made to those with parental responsibility.
- We have the right to do what is reasonable in all circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.

Allegations Against Staff

- There may be times when a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff. In such cases, procedures will be carried out in accordance with the LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008 and the Allegations Manager as laid down in the Bedfordshire LSCB with reference to the Safeguarding Policy.
- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the head teacher who will discuss with Bedfordshire LSCB and the Chair of Governors.
- The head teacher on such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Principal Education Welfare Officer.
- If the allegation made to the member of staff concerns the head teacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the Allegations Manager.

- The school has adopted the procedures set out in the LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008.

Monitoring and Record Keeping

The school plays a vital role in helping abused children and those who are at risk of being abused, by monitoring and recording certain aspects of the child's progress and behaviour in school.

When is recording necessary?

- When there is concern in school over:
 - marks on a child's body
 - unusual/different behaviour
 - mood changes
 - puzzling statements or stories from the child
 - information from others
- If requested by another agency, for example following a case conference.

Who will record?

- Teachers who are responsible for the children in their care
- Non-teaching staff should report all suspicions to the designated teacher or the head teacher. They may be asked to make a written record if appropriate.
- Other visitors to the school, outsiders/community members, extended family members and other pupils may also provide information. *Staff should bear in mind that such information is third hand and potential motives behind other persons giving this information.*

What and how will it be recorded?

The record should be used to record something that you saw, smelt or heard, or it can be a record of a conversation a member of staff had with a child/young person, a parent/carer or professional. The record should be on A4 paper and should include –

- the full date and time
- full details of your concern or what was said to you
- the full name/title and address of any professional who you have liaised with
- your full name at the end, with your signature

Information should be recorded in factual, non-emotive, non-judgmental terms, with notes of the time, date and context. Use of the exact words of the child is essential, no attempt should be made to correct the child's language/words used. Care should be taken not to ask the child concerned leading questions which may jeopardise the validity of the record. The file will be kept in a locked cabinet and confidentiality will be respected. The head teacher will decide when to start and finish monitoring and decide on further action e.g. contact with parents/social worker etc.

Confidentiality

- All staff are made aware that personal information about a child and his/her family is confidential and should only be given to an appropriate person.
- If abuse is suspected, accurate information should be given only to the designated teacher or head teacher immediately; other staff need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed child.
- The child, depending on age, should be kept informed of who knows and why they know.

- Teachers should not, in any circumstances, remove a child's clothing. They should only note those marks which they have noticed or which have been brought to their attention by the child. No further examination should be carried out.
- If staff hear worrying information about children from other parents, neighbours or even other children, this should be passed on to the designated teacher.
- If there is a threat to a child's safety and welfare, all staff may have to be alerted to watch for signs of abuse. In such circumstances the family will be informed of this monitoring arrangement.

Implementation and Review

- This policy will be made known to all staff, parents and governors.
- The policy will be reviewed annually.
- The policy will be taken into consideration when updating school development plans by consultation with appropriate staff.
- Reference to the policy will assist in the identification of in-service requirements.

How to report suspicions of Child Abuse

After three significant expressions of concern have been recorded (over a school year), the school should contact Social Care via the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in order to make a referral. The school should also liaise with other schools where siblings are to discuss concerns. In deciding when to refer and the referral process, staff should adopt procedures outlined in the LSCB Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures 2008. On occasions, there may be times where staff seek advice over the telephone from Social Care regarding specific individuals without there being three significant expressions of concern.

Child Protection Referral

Section 47[1] of the Children Act 1989 gives the local authority a duty to investigate when it is suspected or found that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The local authority will then make enquiries from other agencies to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. As a school we have a statutory duty to assist social services departments acting on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse. As well as this statutory duty we have a pastoral responsibility towards our pupils and we recognise that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Children cannot learn effectively unless they feel safe and secure. We therefore have a child protection policy, which reflects both our statutory duty and our pastoral responsibilities. If we have a concern that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused, we have a duty to refer this to social services. This may be done with/without parental disclosure. In making any referral, the school is not making any judgement for example about individual parents or carers. It is for social services to decide whether there should be an investigation.

Child in Need Referral

There may be other circumstances (which are not to do with child protection, but more related to meeting children's needs) when we feel that you and your family may benefit from some support from other agencies, i.e. social services. Before we can do this we will need to seek your permission. We will then complete a Child in Need form. In most cases this will be done with you.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

	<u>Bedford Borough</u>		
	Keith Scott	Education Officer	
228668			
	Chris Morris	EWO	316460 ext
68460			
	Francesca Parrington (Allegations Manager)		01234
276560			
	<u>Social Care</u>		
	Intake and Assessment Team South (for Bedford and East Beds)		01234
223599			
	(Mon – Thurs 8:45am – 5:20pm; Fri 8:45am – 4:20pm)		
	Emergency Duty Team for Bedfordshire and Luton		0870
2385465			
	(Mon – Thurs 5pm – 9pm; Fri 4pm – Mon 9am)		
	<u>Police</u>		
	Family Protection Team, Greyfriars		01234
275325			
	NSPCC 24hour Child Protection line		0808 800
5000			

The designated staff member for Child Protection is Miss L Burraway
The designated governor for Child Protection is Rev J Owen

Lisa Burraway
January 2011
Review January 2012