

# **Child Protection Policy (Full and Formal)**

**Updated 12 July 2011**

## **1. Principles**

This school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care.

Safeguarding encompasses many aspects of school life, wherever a child's welfare might be compromised; child protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding.

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.

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

This school follows the Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures – November 2006, adopted by Dorset Local Authority (LA), referenced in the 'Yellow File' and updated regularly.

Staff 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 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)

We recognise that school staff because of their contact with and knowledge of the children or young people in their care, are well placed to identify abuse and report appropriately.

Our recruitment and selection procedure includes checks on all staff as to their suitability to have contact with children including Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced checks and the taking up of references. These checks have also been taken up on all staff appointed prior to the requirement for such checks.

Statements about or allegations of abuse or neglect made by children will always be taken seriously and acted upon.

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 (previously known as Social Care and Health) and the Police.

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

All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures & Guidance
- DfES Guidance (0027/2004) - Safeguarding Children in Education
- DfES Supplementary Guidance (1568/2005) - Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings
- DfES Supplementary Guidance (2044/2005) - Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff
- DfES Supplementary Guidance (2004) - Extended Work Experience and Child Protection (**for Key Stage 4 pupils only**)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - Guidance published by the Department of Health (2005)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance - DfES 31553

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 **Mrs L C Carter**. If Mrs Carter is unavailable, **Mrs E. Wharton** will deputise, whilst in the Pre-Prep (which includes the EYFS) the designated senior person is the Headmistress, **Mrs A Boardman-Hirst**. The name of the designated senior person(s) for child protection should be clearly displayed in the entrance hall/foyer.

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 251450
- Bridport 01308 422234
- Weymouth/  
Portland 01305 760139
- Portland 01305 827000
- Purbeck 01929 553456
- Ferndown 01202 877445
- Christchurch 01202 474106
- Bournemouth 01202 458102
- Poole 01202 735046
- **Out of hours: 01202 657259**

Telephone referrals to Children's Services local offices should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours, using the inter-agency referral form.

In general, school staff will discuss their concerns with parents/carers and advise them of any referrals to Children's Services, 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.

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.

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.

Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual pupils/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

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.

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, the Headmaster should refer the case to the Children's Services local office.

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

The DfES Guidance 'Safeguarding Children in Education: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff' will be followed.

Schools (normally the Head) should contact the Officer for Child Protection (who is the Designated LA Officer) for consultation on 01305 225057. The Designated Officer 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 LA Officer is not available, there should be no delay in taking advice or referring to Children's Services.) 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 welfare of the child must take precedence (Children Act 1989, Section 1 (1)(a)).

Where the allegation is against the Head, the Designated LA Officer for Child Protection should be contacted by the Chair of Governors for advice on how to proceed.

Alternative accommodation away from children will be arranged if a member of the boarding staff is suspended pending investigation.

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 Headmaster, that all staff are aware of safe working practice and follow guidelines on the use of control and physical restraint.

### **4. Supporting Children**

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.

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.

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

### **5. Record Keeping**

Any member of staff 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.

All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

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 need not automatically 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.

Files relating to concerns about pupils will include a chronology of incidents and subsequent actions/outcomes.

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

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.

It is recommended that a child's records are kept for 10 years after he/she leaves compulsory education.

### **6. Parental Involvement**

This school is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all pupils.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the school's child protection policy.

In the first instance the school will seek advice from the Children's Services Social Care offices. Where possible, concerns about children should be discussed with parents/carers unless to do

so would place the pupil at increased risk of significant harm or be contrary to the welfare of the child.

## **7. Training**

Governors recognise the importance of child protection training for the designated senior person and for all other staff and volunteers in the school.

The designated senior person will be encouraged to attend training events organised by the LA or the Area Child Protection Committee. This person must have inter-agency training and receive 'refresher' training at least every two years.

**(Note - The Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) was replaced by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) by April 2006)**

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.

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

Governors will ensure that the school has identified a designated senior person for child protection, and deputy/ies, and consider a nominated governor for safeguarding.

The nominated governor for child protection, Rokeya Danger, 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). Newly appointed staff should read copies of the policy and procedures as part of their induction training.

The designated governor 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.

The governors will review and up-date (if appropriate) the child protection policy.

As previously stated, the Chair of Governors will take action, according to agreed procedures, where there are allegations against the Head.

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

The school places 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

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.

### **10. Children with Special Educational Needs**

The school 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.

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.

The school has an intimate care policy (see Pupil Contact Policy), which is available to parents/carers on request.

### **11. Whistleblowing**

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

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 Head or Designated LA officer.

(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 on **22 June 2007** and was last reviewed by them on **22 May 2009**.

It was last updated on **12 July 2011**. It will be reviewed at least annually.

**Author: LCC**