

# Sacred Heart School

## Child Protection Policy

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Whatever our doubts and fears when dealing with any disclosure the needs and safety of the child must always be our priority.

### AIMS

We aim to do our best to provide a safe and secure environment in which our pupils have the freedom to learn and achieve their potential by

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

### STRATEGIES

In order to achieve our aims we

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in Child Protection and that it is updated every 3 years
- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
  
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by including this policy in the welcome pack.

- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed including enhanced CRB checks for all teaching staff.

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.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

## PROCEDURE

If a child discloses anything that causes concern or if an adult has cause for concern the following steps must be followed:

- Do not promise that you will not tell anyone else but assure the child that he is doing the right thing and is not in any way to blame
- Listen
- Do not ask any leading questions – use the ‘TED’ questions: **T**ell me what happened; **E**xplain what happened; **D**escribe what happened.
- Do not adjust or remove any of the child’s clothing in order to see marks or injuries
- Do not start an investigation

- Complete the Incident Form immediately, by hand, sign and date and report to the designated person.
- Respect the child's dignity and right to confidentiality and discuss with other people only on a 'need to know' basis
- Continue to be vigilant; listen and observe
- Do not do nothing

In this school the Designated Person is the Head Teacher. The Designated Person has a responsibility to

- Direct staff
- Seek advice
- Refer concerns to the police and/or Children's Services
- Liaise with other agencies
- Ensure that all paperwork are stored securely in a lockable cabinet to which access is restricted
- Undertake refresher training every 2 years
- Pass on child protection files when a child leaves the school

Important phone numbers:

Appendix : Incident Form