



Sacred Heart School

Child Protection (Safeguarding) 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. We are committed to working in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures

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 practise 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 and that part-time and voluntary staff who work with children are to be made aware of the arrangements;
- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support in child protection and inter-agency working for this role. Such training will be updated every 2 years.
- 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 appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils (for example: mSporti, Chess, music teachers)
- 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, in line with the cwdc Safer Recruitment guidelines, including enhanced CRB checks for all teaching staff. The Head Teacher, Mrs Hilary Blake and a member of the governing body, Mrs Maureen Hughes, are currently trained in cwdc Safer Recruitment.
- Ensure that if we find any weaknesses or deficiencies in our child protection arrangements, they are remedied without delay.

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 – do 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
- Do complete the Incident Form immediately, by hand, sign and date and report to the designated person.
- Do respect the child’s dignity and right to confidentiality and discuss with other people only on a ‘need to know’ basis
- Do continue to be vigilant; listen and observe
- **Do not do nothing**

In this school the Designated Person is the Head Teacher. In the absence of the Head Teacher refer to the Nursery Manger who is also a Designated Person. The Designated Person has a responsibility to

- Direct staff
- Seek advice
- Refer concerns to the police and/or Children’s Services within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse
- Liaise with other agencies
- Ensure that all paperwork is 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

As well as their duty to the children, staff have a responsibility to keep themselves safe from the risk of false accusations and should have regard to the following:

- Avoid situations where you are alone with one child; leave the door open if you are in a room with a child or ask a colleague to accompany you
- Never share personal email or phone details with pupils or their parents
- Maintain appropriate professional dialogue with pupils, even in less formal situations such as clubs and visits
- Report any concerns allegations immediately to the designated person, who is the Head Teacher. Remember that such matters are confidential and may be shared with colleagues only on a strictly ‘need to know’ basis.

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

This procedure references the cwdc Safer Recruitment Guidance SG02/1009

- Parents or carers of a child or children should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know about it. They should be kept informed of the progress of the case and the outcome.
- Where a child has suffered significant harm children’s social care or the police as appropriate should consider what support the child may need
- The member of staff who is the subject of the allegation should be kept informed of the progress of the case and ongoing support should be arranged.

- The Head Teacher will make a considered judgement as to whether the member of staff should be suspended immediately. If it is deemed appropriate that the member of staff may continue in the workplace this will only be decided following a thorough risk assessment of the situation and with proper safeguards in place to ensure the safety of all parties involved.
- Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while the matter is being investigated
- Resignation does not offer any protection against investigation.
- Compromise agreements may not be used in such cases
- Clear and comprehensive summaries of any allegations must be kept in a confidential personnel file and copied to the individual concerned.
- Such information must be retained on file until normal retirement age or for 10 years, whichever is the longer.
- All cases must be resolved as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair investigation.
- All allegations or concerns about staff, volunteers or the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding should be reported to the Head Teacher. If the Head is absent, the allegation should be passed to the chair of governors. If the allegation concerns the Head, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the chair of governors without notifying the Head first. In case of serious harm, the police should be informed from the outset by the Head (or chair of governors) who is also responsible for liaising with local statutory children's agencies.
- The Nursery Manager, Mrs Anne Horsfall Turner, is the designated person in the Foundation Stage and has lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting and liaising with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate
- Procedures need to be applied with common sense and judgement. It is important that all allegations are followed up and are examined objectively.
- Should an allegation be made against a member of staff who is subsequently removed from regulated activity, or who leaves while under investigation for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk of harm we will advise all agencies, including the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) in the interests of child protection.

Important phone numbers:

Social Services Information line: 08456 010 664

Police Liaison Officer P.C. Peter Cook 08456 070 999

Appendix : Incident Form

We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.

The governing body undertakes an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This review is conducted at their meeting during the second half of the summer term. The next review is due in June 2010.