

Hamp Community Junior School

Child Protection Policy

Reviewed October 2009

Signature

Approved Date

Rationale

To ensure that in Hamp Community Junior School there is

- effective management of suspicions of significant harm to children and subsequent referrals

and that we

- prevent abuse by helping our pupils to acquire the relevant information, skills and attitudes both to resist abuse in their own lives and to prepare them for the responsibilities of their adult lives.

Aims

The school's mission statement and aims underpins our life in school. In particular we aim:

- to develop in children self-discipline, self-motivation, independence and confidence;
- to encourage in children caring attitudes, thoughtfulness, respect and understanding for others within a safe, caring, happy and well ordered environment;
- to develop an ethos where children are valued, respected, listened to and taken seriously;
- to support children including any who are at particular risk or who have disclosed abuse.

Review and Report to Governors

This policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis and the designated governor will provide an annual report to the governing body.

We believe that the childrens' general happiness and welfare at school play a crucial role in their educational development.

To ensure effective prevention and 'safe children', we aim for:

- good links with parents, carers and other professionals working within our area;
- a curriculum that offers opportunities to discuss emotions, relationships, good and bad secrets, bullying and assertiveness through developing emotional literacy;
- respect for the child's colour, gender, race and creed.

Designated roles~

- Mrs Edwards is the Child Protection and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and leads the Pastoral Care Team ~
Mrs H Honeyball - SENCO
Kim Williams - Lead Learning Mentor
Mr K Newell - Home School Liaison Worker & Learning Mentor
Mrs J Selway - Nurture Group Assistant & Learning Mentor
- The nominated governor for child protection is Mrs S Wood.
- The staff and governor concerned will ensure training is kept up to date on a two yearly basis through update training provided by the LEA.
- The LEA are informed of any changes to the designated teacher or nominated governor.

Information

- All staff are made aware of the Co-ordinator and a notice is posted in the staffroom to that effect

- The Somerset Child Protection Handbook is located in the office and this information is also posted in the staffroom. In addition a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' is available in the office and in the staffroom, as well as in each teacher's policy file.
- The school prospectus will include information for parents about the school's role in child protection with reference to the Child Protection Policy. The school regularly informs parents of support available within the community through newsletters, leaflets, letters and the notice boards.

Training within school

- Dissemination of training on Child Protection issues will be carried out by the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator and the Pastoral Team and needs the involvement of both teaching and support staff. This will be a priority for induction procedures for all new staff. Staff should feel confident about Child Protection procedures, and these are outlined in the Handbook.
- Staff will be aware that there will be occasions when they will be required to monitor particular pupils with regard to Child Protection concerns.
- The Headteacher will ensure that members of staff attending a Child Protection case conference are fully briefed about procedures and cover arrangements are in place. See Handbook.

Support

The Co-ordinator will-

- Offer support to staff who have suspicions about a child, have handled a disclosure, attended a Child Protection case conference or given evidence in court;
- Co-ordinate support within the school for the child **during** and **after** a referral has been made to Social Services or the Locality Team.

Liaison

The Co-ordinator will-

- Liaise with other agencies, especially Social Services, the Localities Team and the Police, through the Child Protection Forum and in other ways;
- Ensure the Nurse responsible for the school and the Education Social Worker knows the identity of the Child Protection Co-

ordinator and have a copy of the Child Protection Policy for the School.

- Involve other agencies, whenever appropriate, in joint training and support.

Transfer of Records

- Non-specific concerns will be noted by the class teacher or support staff on Pastoral Concerns forms to ensure a full ongoing record is maintained. These may be referred to when a more specific concern arises. The forms should be dated, signed and given to a member of the Pastoral Team.
- Records of Child Protection case conferences and other sensitive information is retained in a confidential file in the SENCO's room and is not retained in the teacher's pupil's files.
- Information about any child is disseminated only on a '**need to know**' basis, bearing in mind the importance of confidentiality.
- The Headteacher will pass on records when a child, who is on the Child Protection Register, leaves for another school.
- Should a child transfer from one school to another within the County whilst the child's name is on the Child Protection Register, the records will be transferred, and direct liaison will take place between the Child Protection Co-ordinators involved, in discussion with the relevant Social Worker.
- If the child is transferred to a school out of County, all records will be passed to the receiving authority, again in discussion with the relevant Social Worker.
- The school follows the guidance provided by the LEA regarding children who move school or disappear.
- For children who are de-registered, records will be destroyed as soon as possible after de-registration.

Evaluation

The Co-ordinator, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's Child Protection Policy, will monitor particularly:

- The curriculum provision for children;

- The effectiveness of the communication between children, staff, parents and other agencies.

Curriculum

The curriculum will enhance the children's confidence and independence. The school will promote child protection and safeguarding of children through:

- PHSE & Citizenship (including SEAL) work
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Identifying where these issues can be raised through Assemblies (SEAL)
- Circle Time
- Health Promotion
- Sex and Relationships Education

Staff will be given training opportunities whenever possible, in order to develop skills and expertise in this sensitive area.

Recruitment Procedures

The school will ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment and disciplinary policies and procedures. This will include ensuring appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who work with children, including Criminal Record Bureau and List 99 as advised through the LEA's personnel guidance.

Allegations against Members of Staff and volunteers

Allegations against members of staff or volunteers should be referred to the Headteacher who will liaise with relevant agencies and/or the Chair of Governors and nominated governor for Child Protection as appropriate.

Allegations against the Headteacher would be referred to the Chair of Governors in the first instance who would then liaise with the relevant agencies and follow LEA guidance.

Revised by Mrs G S Edwards
Spring 2009

Guidance to staff in Child Protection Procedures

Procedures

If you have a concern that a child has been mistreated, either physically, emotionally or sexually, or by neglect, you must:

- Report the matter to the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator;
- Keep the matter confidential to as few people as need to know;
- Write a dated Pastoral Concerns form of what has been noticed, said and done, and give this to a member of the Pastoral Team.

It is not your responsibility to investigate this matter. It will be the duty of those responsible to gather enough information to decide whether or not to contact either the Localities Team or Social Services.

The Social Services Department and the Police have a duty to investigate cases of suspected abuse. Those who work in the education service have a duty to co-operate with any such investigation. This might involve providing information, monitoring the child or, in some cases, attending a Child Protection Conference.

For further information consult the LEA's full Child Protection Handbook which is available in the main office.

General Advice

- Staff and adults are well placed to notice possible signs of abuse in children because of their regular contact.
- Signs of abuse may be obvious or sudden - for example an injury or bruising
- Or part of a picture which builds up over a longer period which may include:
 - Behaviour which is 'out of character' or unusual for the child or for a child of that age;
 - Work falling off or lack of interest;
 - Isolation or introversion;
- Alternatively you may become concerned when a child tells you or a friend about ill-treatment which has happened to him or her, or to a brother or sister, or a friend or when an adult claims that a child has been mistreated.
- In all these cases there are things you should do:
 - **Treat the matter seriously and reassure the child if necessary;**
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 - **React to what the child tells you with belief;**
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 - **Make it clear that you will probably have to inform others;**
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 - **Tell only those who need to know;**
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 - **Seek advice if in doubt;**
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- **Keep a careful watch on the child;**
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- **Keep an accurate record of what you have noticed, what has happened and what you have done (Green Pastoral Concerns Form)**
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- **If a child made a disclosure to you, tell the child what action you must take;**

- **There are things you should not do:**
 - **Do not promise to keep the matter secret;**
 - **Do not contact parents - this is the responsibility of the Pastoral Team to inform Social Services or the Localities Team. They will contact the parents;**
 - **Do not interrogate children or ask leading questions;**
 - **Do not speak to anyone about whom allegations are made, even if the allegations are about a colleague or another adult.**

Child Protection in Context

- About three or four children die each week in the UK as the result of some form of abuse
- Children are abused more often by people they know or members of their own family rather than strangers
- Child abuse happens in all social and cultural groupings
- Children of all ages suffer from abuse
- Abuse can have long-lasting, traumatic effects which damage children's development~ both physical and psychological

Dilemmas in Working Together in Child Protection

- Child Protection involves different services and agencies working together towards a common goal. Good communications between the agencies is essential for the school's policy to work~ the School's Child Protection Policy is only a part of the system in place for the protection of children. To this end, Inter-Agency Child Protection Training is given to one or more members of staff and they have the responsibility to disseminate their training to the whole staff.
- There is no shared body of knowledge or precise definitions about what constitutes 'significant harm', 'good enough parenting' or the 'needs of children' for example~ every individual will have his or her own point of view.
- Once information is passed on to relevant agencies there is often very little knowledge about what is happening as a result of the referral.
- We are all subject to our own emotions, feelings and anxieties. These can sometimes 'get in the way' when dealing with child protection issues.
- We have to balance our responsibilities to individual children, the school and ourselves.

- We have to learn not to be afraid to share concerns, even with no real 'evidence' and we have to watch for changes in the children in our care as well as listen.
- We have to know when and how to talk to parents and carers and when to talk to other agencies.
- We may experience concerns~
 - That the child may feel you have betrayed a trust
 - About the possible consequences of your actions in passing concerns along
 - Of being wrong or losing control of the situation
- We have to learn how to cope with our own feelings in dealing with Child Protection issues.

Definitions and Symptoms of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse:

- Physical injury
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse

The following list of symptoms is not exhaustive or comprehensive but consists of frequently observed symptoms. It is important to remember that most cases of abuse involves more than one type, for example sexual and emotional abuse may be recognised together. It is also important to remember that accidents do happen and that one needs to look at the 'whole child' and not to pre-judge situations.

Physical Injury

Actual or risk of physical injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation, and Munchausen's by Proxy (this is now referred to as 'presenting with fictitious illnesses'). This includes excessive punishment.

Symptoms:

- Bruises
- Broken bones
- Cuts and grazes
- Behaviour changes/wet bed/soiling/withdrawal/regression
- Frequent unexplained injuries
- Finger mark bruising

- Burns
- Fear of physical contact
- Violent behaviour at play or in role play
- Unwillingness to change for PE or swimming
- Aggressive language and use of threats
- Cowering
- Bruising in unusual areas
- Changing explanation of injuries
- Not wanting to go home to parent or carer (even when ill)

Neglect

Actual or risk of persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation. Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Symptoms:

- Dirty
- Lack of appropriate clothing
- Cold~ complaining of
- Body sores
- Urine smells
- Unkempt hair (failure to treat headlice)
- No parental interest
- Not wanting to communicate
- Behaviour problems
- Attention seeking
- Lack of respect
- Often in trouble (out of school / police)
- Bullying/also persistent victim of bullying
- Use of bad language
- Out playing very late
- Stealing
- Lack of confidence / low self-esteem
- Jealousy
- Access to inappropriate TV / video / books

Sexual Abuse

Actual or risk of sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent or developmentally immature. The involvement of dependent, immature children and adolescents in activities to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Symptoms:

- **Inappropriate behaviour / language**
- **Withdrawn**
- **Change in behaviour**
- **Role play**
- **Rejecting physical contact or demanding attention**
- **Physical evidence ~ marks, bruising**
- **Pain in going to the toilet, strong urine, soiling**
- **Rocking**
- **Masturbating**
- **Relationships with other adults or children being 'forward' or age inappropriate**
- **Knowledge**
- **Stained underwear**
- **Bruising / marks in genital area / complaints of soreness**
- **Drawing or writing displaying inappropriate knowledge**

Emotional Abuse

Actual or risk of severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. It is important to remember that all abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment.

Symptoms:

- **Crying**
- **Rocking**
- **Withdrawn**
- **Isolated / not wanting to socialise**
- **Cringing**
- **Negative behaviour**
- **Aggression**
- **Behaviour changes**
- **Bribery by parent**
- **Self infliction of wounds**
- **Lack of confidence / low self-esteem**
- **Attention seeking**
- **Isolation from peers / difficulty in communicating**
- **Clingy**
- **Afraid of authoritative figures**
- **Treating others as they have been treated**

Duty of the school

Hamp Community Junior School recognises its legal duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse.

The Governing Body will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

Child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially through PHSE & Citizenship, Health education and Sex and Relationships education.

At Hamp Community Junior School we aim to ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with for the benefit and social development of all concerned. All pupils are encouraged to show respect for others and to take responsibility for protecting themselves.

Policy for Child Protection

The Policy for Child Protection has been developed in consultation with the whole school staff and from training and advice from the Inter-agency Child Protection Team.

At Hamp Community Junior School every member of staff, whether teaching or non-teaching, knows that they have a duty to be aware of child protection issues and to follow the child protection procedures laid down if they have any concerns.

The area of child protection is one of the most sensitive areas that we have to deal with in school. It is essential that staff remain

professional, listen without judgement and pass on all concerns. All staff seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude as part of their responsibility for pastoral care.

Parents

Parents are expected to help their children to behave in non-violent and non-abusive ways towards both staff and other pupils. Parents will be informed if it was necessary to use minimal force to protect a pupil from injury or to prevent a pupil from harming others.

Parents should always inform the school the day of any accidental bruising or other injuries that may be misinterpreted. They should also inform the school of any changes in home circumstances, such as the death of a member of the family, separation or divorce, that might lead to otherwise unexplained changes in behaviour or characteristics.

Parents can feel confident that procedures are in place to ensure that all staff appointed have undergone procedures to ensure they are suitable to work with children. All voluntary helpers undergo similar procedures including a police check.

If parents have any complaints about staff behaviour they should be made to the Headteacher in the first instance. All those involved, both pupils and staff, are entitled to a fair hearing. If parents are not satisfied with the school's response they should contact the school's Educational Welfare Officer at Bridgwater Social Services, or the senior officer responsible for co-ordinating action on child protection in the Education Department at County Hall, Taunton.