



Safeguarding Children Policy

The Child Protection Policy is written in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) And the DCSF 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' January 2007.

The safeguarding of children's welfare in all stages is central to their education. Because of their day to day contact with them, teachers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in children's behaviour or their failure to develop. They need, therefore, to be alert to the possibility of abuse occurring, aware of the procedures to be followed if they have suspicions and the confidence to follow those procedures.

The aim of this policy is to provide the information for teaching staff to carry out this duty of care responsibly. This involves five main elements:

- 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 with reference to their agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which pupils in all key stages and EYFS can learn and develop.

We recognize that because of day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum and through imaginative play and exploration in the EYFS for pupils to develop the skills needed to stay safe.



We follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the DCSF to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for Child Protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. In the Senior School this is the Senior Tutor (Pastoral) and in the Junior School including EYFS, the Mistress in Charge. All staff know who is the designated Child Protection Officer in each part of the school.
- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is available on the website and also in hard copy.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than 2 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 that all records are kept securely, separate from the main file and in locked locations.
- Follow procedures when an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- Ensure that safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Ensure that any weaknesses or deficiencies in child protection are remedied without delay.

We recognize 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. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum in EYFS and all other Key Stages.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The Behaviour Policies in both EYFS / Lower School and Senior School are aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils. Pupils are taught to understand that some behaviour is unacceptable. The policies also ensure that pupils feel valued which is essential if a child has been abused.



- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, CAMHS, Educational 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 the pupil's social worker is informed.

Categories of Abuse

The following categories of abuse are recognized for the purposes of the Child Protection Register:

- a) Neglect – persistent or severe neglect, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.
- b) Physical Injury – actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.
- c) Sexual Abuse – actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent.
- d) Emotional Abuse – actual or likely adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection.

Signs of Abuse

Teachers and other staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. Bruises, lacerations and burns may be apparent, particularly when pupils change for Games lessons. Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition and of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence or attention seeking behaviour may be noticeable. Sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs or lead to a substantial behaviour change. These signs and others can do no more than give rise to suspicion – they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred, but teachers should be alert to all signs.

Staff must be aware of the possibility of child on child abuse within or out of school. In such cases, procedures outlined in the School's Behaviour Policy will be followed alongside those in this policy.



Procedure for Staff

Any teacher who has suspicions that a child is being abused should inform the Senior Tutor (Pastoral) in Senior School or the Mistress in Charge of Lower School for Junior School pupils including EYFS. These staff have responsibility for liaising with the relevant local agencies under the procedures established by the Lincolnshire Area Safeguarding Board.

Interviewing of Pupils

It is important that teachers seek information from children with tact and sympathy. This is particularly important if the child is making allegations of abuse. The teacher's role is not to investigate but to listen carefully, keep relevant notes and pass on the information to the designated staff. No undertakings of absolute confidentiality should be given.

The school has professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. If a pupil confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret it is important that the member of staff tells the pupil sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies within that context, the pupil should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about pupils and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. Child Protection records should be securely locked.

Upon receiving an allegation of physical or sexual abuse, the designated Child Protection Officer will:

- Limit any questioning to the minimum necessary to seek clarification only, strictly avoiding 'leading' the pupil or adult who has approached them by making suggestions or asking questions that introduce their own ideas about what happened.
- Stop asking any more questions as soon as the pupil or adult who has approached them by making suggestions or asking questions that introduce their own ideas about what has happened.
- Tell the informing pupil or adult that they will now make sure that appropriate people are brought in to take the problem up.
- Ask the informing pupil or adult what steps they would like taken to protect them now that they have made an allegation and assure them that the school will try to follow their wishes.
- Take any steps needed to protect any pupil involved from immediate harm.



- Contact the relevant local agency within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse and/or parents.
- Follow advice given regarding:
 - a) Informing a pupil's parents.
 - b) Medical examination or treatment of a pupil.
 - c) Immediate protection that may be needed for a pupil who has been the victim of abuse, a pupil who has given information about abuse and a pupil against whom an allegation has been made.
 - d) Informing other people of the school (including any other members of staff) of the allegation and its investigation.
 - e) Informing the placing authority if there is one.
- Inform the pupil or adult who made the initial allegation of what the next steps are to be.
- If necessary suspend from duty, pending investigation, any member of staff who is alleged to have abused a pupil or pupils.
- Take any necessary steps for the longer term protection and support of each pupil who has made allegations of abuse or is alleged to have suffered from abuse, taking their wishes fully into account.
- Ensure that any pupil being interviewed by the police has available a supportive member of staff to accompany them if they so wish.
- Notify DCSF of any allegation that is being investigated by the Social Care Office or the Police.
- Make arrangements where feasible for any pupil who has been the subject of abuse to receive any necessary continuing counseling and support by agreement with parents where appropriate.
- Inform, (as in instance of 'serious harm to a pupil') both:
 - a) The Local District Health Authority
 - b) The Department of Health at CS2C, Room 2 – 6, Wellington House, 133 – 135 Waterloo Road, London. SE1 5UG.



Drug Use and Child Protection

The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause;

- to believe the young person drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- to believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others particularly adults
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse

Children of Drug Using Parents

Further enquiries and or further action will be taken when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection)
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour

Guidelines for Staff Awareness

- It is the responsibility of all staff to be fully cognizant of the school's procedures in respect of child protection.
- Any injury to a pupil must be recorded in the accident book in the Senior School and the Playground Book in the Lower School and EYFS. Accident sheets are also lodged by the Lower School in the main school office. Head injuries are always reported in writing to parents.
- Teachers are advised against spending excessive amounts of time alone with one pupil away from other people. Pupils should not be retained alone for disciplinary purposes.
- Physical contact with pupils can cause difficulties as actions can be misconstrued. It is therefore important for staff to be aware of this when dealing with pupils.



- In a residential setting staff should avoid admitting a pupil into their bedroom unless another member of staff is present.
- Staff are reminded that suspicions of abuse by a colleague must be passed on.
- Staff should take care if a pupil goes to their own home.
- Staff should exercise caution when offering to give a lift to a pupil. The pupil should always sit in the back of the car.
- Staff are advised not to communicate with pupils via any interactive network sites such as Facebook, Bebo etc and should exercise caution when undertaking any electronic communication with a pupil.

Training

All teaching staff, support staff and part time staff have Child Protection Training every three years.

The designated Child Protection Officers undertake Child Protection training every two years.

Procedure for dealing with an allegation against a member of staff.

Teachers, because of their daily contact with children in a variety of situations including the wider caring role, are vulnerable to accusations of abuse. Their relationships with pupils may lead to allegations against them being made by pupils or parents or persons with parental responsibility. Kirkstone House School will deal with allegations in a sensitive manner, bearing in mind the rights of both pupil and teacher.

- Children who report that they have been abused by a member of staff must be listened to and heard, whatever form their attempts to communicate their worries takes;
- A written, dated record should be made of the allegations as soon as is practicable (certainly within 24 hours).
- Teachers who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the Head of School.
- If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the Principals will be informed.

- The Headteacher will make an urgent initial consideration to ascertain whether there is sufficient substance in the allegation against a teacher to warrant an investigation.
- The Headteacher in consultation with the principles will liaise with Lincolnshire / Cambridgeshire Social Services



There are four possible outcomes:

- (a) an immediate referral
- (b) there is reason to suppose abuse may have occurred and a referral may be necessary
- (c) the allegation is apparently without foundation
- (d) the allegation was prompted by inappropriate behaviour which will need to be considered under the School's Discipline Policy

Under (a) or (b) (above), two possible investigations will take place.

- (a) by local government agencies (Police, Social Services) (external) or
- (b) under Kirkstone House School disciplinary procedures (internal).

Any internal disciplinary process will be separated from a child protection investigation. The latter takes precedence over the former.

An external investigation will involve the Headmistress and to help plan strategy and the conduct of the investigation. The question is asked whether other children are likely to be, or have been, at risk? Other children may be interviewed.

Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children

- The school will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to Circular DfES/0278/2002 Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young People in the Education Service.
- The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents. Sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the sexual offences act 2003 (Abuse of position of trust).

Review

This policy is reviewed annually. A Child Protection report is sent on an annual basis to the School Principals.



Links with other Policies:

Anti-Bullying Policy
Senior School Behaviour Policy
Junior School Behaviour Policy
Recruitment Policy
Drugs Policy
Missing Pupil Policy
First Aid Policy

Signed:

Cosmin Hares.

(Headteacher)

Policy Review Date: October 2010