

Sidmouth Primary School

Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Child Protection Co-ordinator: Mrs. K. Garnett (Assistant head)

Chair of Governors: Mr J Ranby

It is our policy for all staff (not just the Child Protection Co-ordinator) - teaching and non-teaching - to be alert to signs of abuse and to know to whom they should report any concerns and be aware of correct Child Protection procedures as laid down by the Authority.

Training will take place annually in order to update staff and to make them aware of new procedures. New staff will be shown Child Protection measures as part of their initial mentoring/induction. Training is the responsibility of the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

All staff will have as part of their staff file this policy and procedure. Supply staff and students will also be given the necessary information as a matter of course.

All staff - including dinner ladies, cleaners, adult helpers will be given a 'reminder' of our duty and policy on an annual basis.

In the first instance the safety of our children is the responsibility of each member of staff.

Child Protection referral issues will be the responsibility of the named co-ordinator in liaison with other agencies.

Early, regular discussion with the Special Needs and Child Protection Co-ordinator will help monitor any children giving cause for concern. Keeping all records up to date is vital in monitoring the development of the 'Whole Child' from entry to leaving our school.

Close links with parents will be fostered. The understanding of family circumstances, relationships and attitudes may become important if Child Protection issues ever arise.

Appropriate information regarding concerns, change in family circumstances etc. will be disseminated to relevant staff at staff meetings - this **MUST** be treated confidentially.

Staff should complete our Welfare sheets for general comments to do with the welfare of the children. Each child has its own sheet in a Welfare File. These files are kept in the classrooms and will be regularly checked by the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

A copy of the new Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Guidelines and Procedures is available in the Assistant Heads' office.

This 'Child Protection Policy and Procedures folder will be reviewed annually, in order to incorporate any significant changes to legislation.

Recognition of 'Harm'

'everybody who works with children, parents and other adults in contact with children, should be able to recognise and know how to act upon indicators that a child's welfare or safety may be at risk.' Section 2.4 (ACPC)

Under s31(9) of the Children's Act 1989:

'harm' means ill treatment or the impairment of health and development

The harm or possible harm of a child may come to your attention in a number of different ways. This may be by:

- ✓ Information given by the child, friends or family members
- ✓ The child's behaviour
- ✓ Injury which arouses suspicion (for other signs of harm see ACPC files 2.3)

Categories of Abuse

Neglect
Physical Abuse
Sexual Abuse
Emotional Abuse

Definitions of these are given in the ACPC for Kingston upon Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire file, section 2.1 page 1/1

Procedure for Handling Suspected Cases

- 1 Because of our day to day contact with individual children, teachers and other staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop. Staff should be forever vigilant in this area. Staff should not hesitate to inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator IMMEDIATELY once any suspicions or concerns have arisen in order to cover themselves.
- 2 Where staff see signs which cause them concern they should seek information from the child with TACT and SYMPATHY. Staff should

be aware that the way in which they TALK to a child can have an EFFECT on the EVIDENCE which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings. Leading questions must not be asked, open ended questions must be used and care must be taken in interpreting children's responses to questions about indications of abuse. (It is not our responsibility to INVESTIGATE suspected child abuse).

3 Our chief task is to LISTEN and to RECORD what was said. When making a record this should have the following:

- ✓ the time
- ✓ the date
- ✓ names of other people present
- ✓ actual content of the discussion inc. questions you have asked.
QUOTE words used as much as possible
- ✓ if appropriate a sketch of psychical injuries

NEVER promise the child that what you have been told can be kept a secret. Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. If a child asks for information to be kept secret it is important that the staff tells the child sensitively, it is their responsibility to share the information with someone else. Notes taken may be needed in any subsequent court proceedings.

4 The Child Protection Co-ordinator will contact Wyke Social Services if appropriate. However, if the Social Services Emergency Duty Team cannot be contacted then a referral should be made to the Police Child Protection Unit, or if unavailable, to the Police Station. At that point the 'investigation' is in their hands. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will record the date and time of the referral and what had been discussed.

The parents of the child concerned will be informed of the referral if at all possible.

Within 2 days of the telephone referral, the Child Protection Co-ordinator will also send a written referral giving specific and detailed information.

5 The Chair of the Governors will be informed immediately.

"while professionals should seek, in general, to discuss any concerns with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to making a referral to Social Services, this should not be done where such discussion and agreement seeking will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm" (ACPC section 2.4)

Appointment of Staff

It is standard policy for our recruitment procedures to include a police check on applicants backgrounds, both for employment and volunteer work.

Physical Contact with Pupils

Staff must remain aware that such is our role it is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that teachers should touch pupils only in emergencies. Particularly with young children, touching them is inevitable and can give welcome reassurance to the child.

However, we each have a responsibility to ensure that professional behaviour applies at all time to relationships between staff and pupils; that all staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries, and that those boundaries are maintained with the sensitive support and supervision required.

All staff undertake the 'Team Teach' training programme.

Allegations Against Staff

All staff need to be aware that such allegations made by pupils or colleagues are particularly serious but an open minded approach must be adopted in the first instance as such allegations may be false. The effect on a person's domestic and professional life can be devastating.

When an allegation is made, suspension of the person concerned, may not be automatic. The Headteacher, or governor in a case in which the Headteacher is accused, should consider carefully whether it is the appropriate course in each case.

Procedure

- 1 A written record should be made
- 2 The matter reported to the head or Child Protection Co-ordinator
- 3 The Headteacher and Child Protection Co-ordinator will decide whether there is significant substance to warrant investigation. This may result in an immediate referral under Child Protection procedures

Racial Incidents

The Headteacher is the current co-ordinator for Multi-culture and anti racial education. All racial incidents are recorded and dealt with by the Headteacher as set out in the policy.