



Child Protection Policy

Key Staff

Designated Persons with Child Protection Responsibility: Andrea Walker (head teacher) and Phil Cooper
Supported by the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator): Fiona Hadwin
Governor with Child Protection and Safeguarding Responsibility: Simon Willis

Key Contact Numbers: Cumbria Children's Services 03332401727 or 01768 895019

References

"Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop."

(Working Together under the Children Act 1989)

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE Sept 2016

Cumbria Schools SAN (G) 4 – Use of Volunteers in School

Cumbria Schools SNA (G) 8 – Information & Communications Technology

PURPOSE

An effective whole-school child protection policy is one that provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child and reflect the caring ethos of the school. At Old Hutton CE School we feel that this policy document compliments the aims of many of our Policies including our Behaviour Policy and our SEND Policy, as well as reflecting procedure of the Local Authority.

INTRODUCTION

Old Hutton CE School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Act 1989).

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

There are three main elements to our child protection policy;

- a) Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to pupils.
- b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- c) Support to pupils who may have been abused.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Old Hutton CE School.

SCHOOL POLICY

At School, we recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- Include in the curriculum material that will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within Old Hutton CE School and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of the people carrying out the role of Designated Child Protection Officers within Old Hutton CE School are noted above at the top of this Policy document.

- It is the role of the Designated Child Protection Officers to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to Cumbria Children's Services (via contact numbers at the top of this policy document) in accordance with school procedures as necessary.
- It is the role of the Designated Child Protection Officers to ensure all staff employed including temporary staff and volunteers within the school are aware of the school's internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.
- The Governing Body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the schools recruitment and vetting process, the head and school secretary ensure that prior to appointment, DBS (disclosure and barring service), prohibition from teaching and disqualification by association checks are undertaken on relevant staff and volunteers who have substantial and unsupervised access to children on a sustained or regular basis. The results of these checks are recorded as part of our Single Central Record (SCR). Refer to Cumbria Schools SAN (G) 4 – Use of Volunteers in School for additional information regarding volunteers.
- On occasion parents are asked to transport children in their own vehicles. This is not done on a regular basis. The school policy in this instance is that there will never be one child and one parent together in a vehicle; two adults and one child if necessary, (in the case of transporting a child for

emergency medical treatment,) or at least two children with each adult. Parents who transport for us on this basis will not be DBS checked by school, but do have to provide details of their driving licence, vehicle registration and insurance.

- The role of the Nominated Governor for Child Protection is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the LA and Government Guidelines are complied with and to support the school in this aspect of its work.
- The Designated Child Protection Officers will when applicable provide a report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by staff and governors and other relevant issues.

PROCEDURES

All action is taken in line with the following guidance;

- a) "Keeping Children Safe in Education" DfE, Sept 2016
- b) "Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board" <http://www.cumbrialscb.com/>

Staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, Staff meeting discussions (including a termly designated safeguarding meeting for all staff), briefings (including updates via email) awareness and refresher training.

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation, or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer. In the event that the Designated Child Protection Officers (Andrea Walker or Phil Cooper) are unavailable, the matter should be brought to the attention of the deputy Designated Child Protection Officer, (Fiona Hadwin.) In the event that these three people cannot be contacted then Simon Willis, (Governor with responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding) should be contacted. If none of these people are available, the most senior member of staff available should be used.

Where possible, the disclosure should be reported in verbal format, ensuring that all information given is factual and not speculative. The information will then be recorded in a concerns register for the child, kept in their pupil record file in the head teacher's office, detailing the exact date and details of concern. Not all incidents will lead to referral; this will be at the discretion of the Designated Child Protection Officers, but recording minor incidents will show evidence of accumulated patterns of abuse, which could then lead to referral. The Designated Child Protection Officer will monitor entries frequently, as and when they occur.

The Designated Child Protection Officer may need to liaise with the duty social worker, (through contacting Cumbria Children's Services on numbers above) who would check to see if any other enquiries have been made and will liaise with the Education Office and other agencies to refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations giving the following essential information, the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of the person who initially received the disclosure plus any additional information given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.

The Children's Services Department will be contacted without informing or contacting any person or persons who may be suspected of being guilty of any abuse towards a child, even if that person may be a teacher, member of non-teaching staff or a parent. If a member of staff is suspected of being involved in abuse, that member of staff should not be alerted to the fact before Social Services are contacted.

If a member of staff suspects any of the Designated Child Protection Officer/s of abuse of any kind, the member of staff should contact the other Designated Child protection Officer and not refer the matter to the suspected Child Protection Officer at all. The Second Designated Child Protection Officer may then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer.

If there are any concerns regarding how a member of staff deals with children contact should be made with

Robert Parkes (Local Authority Designated Officer) on 01900 706453 or robert.parkes@cumbriacc.gov.uk

If there is a referral it is understood that Children's Services may share recorded information with the family and members of staff involved in the case, who may be asked to give evidence.

Please see *Appendix 'A'* for more detailed procedures regarding 'Allegations against Staff Members.'

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Old Hutton CE School will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Officers undertake refresher training on a regular basis to keep knowledge and skills up to date (every 2 years). The Head Teacher and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training () to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively. This will include reading 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE Sept 2016), being familiar with this policy and other related policies in school, completing at least Level 1 Safeguarding training provided by the LSCB and being updated regularly by additional/refresher training, our termly safeguarding meeting for all staff, emails and other relevant advice.

Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities via this policy/our safeguarding policy and the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Part 1 document.

Support will be available for staff from the Head Teacher and Designated Officers where there are any concerns or queries about child protection.

PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Officer and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

RECORDS AND MONITORING

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies, as detailed in Section 5 of this policy.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.

These file notes will be kept confidentially as noted above, in the pupil's record files in the head teacher's office.

If a pupil transfers from the school, these files will be forwarded to the pupil's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Child Protection Officer / Co-ordinator.

ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES ETC.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Child Protection Officer to ensure that the school is represented or a report is submitted to any child protection conference called for children on their school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns that the school has.

When a child is placed on the Child Protection Register and is, therefore, a child with a plan, it is the Designated Child Protection Officer's responsibility to ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation.

RECOGNISING ABUSE

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place. Teachers and other staff are well placed to recognise the signs of abuse and the school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk and can be the only place where some children receive warmth, emotional support and strong adult guidance. It is also the place where children should be listened to and carefully observed for signs of stress. Sometimes these signs suggest that a child may be the object of abusive behaviour by parents, other carers or people with whom they have regular contact, including other young people.

Abuse may be split into 4 main categories, these being Physical Injury, Neglect, Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation (CSE), sexting and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)) and Emotional Abuse. The categories are often seen together – for example, sexual abuse may be accompanied by physical violence or threat, emotional abuse accompanied by physical abuse etc. Categorisation is used mainly for the purposes of registration on the Child Protection Register.

All these forms of abuse can also be part of peer on peer abuse, including bullying/online bullying. Bullying may sometimes be so severe that it should be treated in the same way to the 4 above categories of abuse – a child may need protection and the bully will need help to change his/her behaviour.

Any staff concerns about any of the above forms of abuse are to be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
- A consistent approach agreed by all staff that will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that she / he is valued.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- Recognition that statistically children with SEN, behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse, so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple

disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

- Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- Recognition that 'looked after children' may also be particularly at risk, so appropriate training will be provided to deal with any concerns and ensure that, when we have any of these children in our care, they are appropriately supported.
- This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school.

SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.

Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Children's Services, the Police or in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.

USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

DATA PROTECTION ACT AND THE USE OF IMAGES IN SCHOOL

During the course of the year there are many opportunities to record and publicise the activities that the children are involved with which may include filming or photographing children for use in school, on our school website, Facebook page and the local media. Photography or filming will only occur with the permission of parents and the head teacher and the children will only be named where there is a good reason for this to take place.

For further details please **see the Safeguarding Policy and the photo consent record** kept in the office.

POLICY REVIEW

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the review of this policy annually.

Policy revised by AMW & adopted by Governors, June 2015

Revised Jan 2016 & Mar 2017

Policy to be reviewed Mar 2018

APPENDIX 'A'

ALLEGATION AGAINST STAFF MEMBERS

Sometimes allegations are made against members of staff employed by the organisation including volunteers rather than members of the child's family. Such allegations are dealt with according to specific procedures published on the Cumbria LSB website www.cumbrialscb.com (chapter 7).

The member of staff to whom the allegation is reported must:

- treat the matter seriously
- ensure that, where necessary, the child/young person receives appropriate medical attention
- make a written record of the information using the child's/parent's own words, including when the alleged incident took place, who was present and what happened
- sign and date the written record
- report the matter immediately to the Senior Manager or deputy in his/her absence. Where the senior manager is the subject of the allegation, a referral will be made to a more senior manager and the LADO.
- confidentiality must be maintained.

Initial Action by the Senior Manager

The Senior Manager will:

- obtain written details of the allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving the allegation
- countersign and date the written details
- record any other information and names of any potential witnesses
- establish a chronology of significant events
- consider any information already known about those involved
- discreetly check any incident or log books
- on the basis of these factors, make a professional judgement and record the reason for any subsequent action taken.

If the allegation meets, or appears to meet, any of the criteria below or if unsure about the action to take, the Senior Management Officer should consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as soon as possible but certainly within **1 working day**. (Details of how to contact the LADO can be obtained from the LSCB website – see above, from a tab marked 'allegations against staff' on the left). No action should be taken until this discussion takes place, unless emergency action is required to safeguard or protect the child concerned, in which case the usual child protection procedures will take precedence. Contact with the LADO should not be delayed in order to gather information. In order not to compromise any subsequent investigation the member of staff should not be advised that an allegation has been made against them unless it is agreed as appropriate by the LADO or agreed at a strategy discussion if one is agreed as necessary. The child's parent should also be advised at the earliest opportunity that an allegation has been made but they should be advised not to discuss the allegation direct with the staff member concerned.

The LADO must be contacted if the member of staff has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

These procedures apply whilst in connection with his/her employment or voluntary or contracted activity. However, these procedures may also be used where concerns arise about:

- a person's behaviour in their personal life which may impact upon the safety of children to whom they owe a duty of care
- a person's behaviour with regard to his/her own children
- the behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

If an allegation requiring immediate attention is received outside of normal office hours the Senior Manager should consult immediately with the Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service or local Police. They must ensure they inform the LADO the next working day.

Initial consideration by the Senior Manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer

The LADO will establish, in discussion with the Senior Manager, that the allegation is within the scope of the LSCB procedures and may have foundation. There may be up to three strands considered as part of this consideration and the discussion will centre upon whether there is a need for:

- a police investigation because a crime has or may have been committed
- enquiries and assessment by social care to determine if services or emergency actions are required
- consideration by the employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

If agreement is reached that the criteria for action under the first and second bullet points is met the LADO will contact children's social care to ensure a formal 'strategy meeting' is set up involving children's services social care and the police. If only the third criterion is met the LADO will provide advice to the Senior Management Officer on the subsequent management of the case to a satisfactory conclusion with the framework of the organisations procedures for discipline and conduct.

Subsequent Actions

The detailed procedures that need to be followed in either case after this initial consideration are available on the LSCB website www.cumbrialscb.com Advice and guidance is available through the LADO who has a responsibility to provide advice and monitor the case to a conclusion. The Senior Manager is expected to keep the LADO advised of progress especially where it has been agreed that the matter should be dealt with within the framework of the organisation's disciplinary process (see bullet point 3 above). Key issues covered within these procedures are summarised below:

- The decision on suspension/transfer to alternative duties of the staff member subject to the allegation is a matter for responsibility of the Senior Manager. The LSCB does not endorse automatic suspension of staff but the strategy meeting will make a recommendation to the agency if one is required.
- The organisation has a responsibility to provide written **information and support** to the member of staff subject to the allegation normally through an identified manager. An information leaflet is available from the LSCB website.
- The fact that a **decision has been made by the Crown Prosecution Service not to pursue a prosecution or a staff member is found not guilty of an offence** against a child does not mean that a disciplinary process is not required to protect children. A strategy meeting will be established if a disciplinary process may be necessary in such circumstances.
- The organisation has a responsibility to **conduct disciplinary investigations as speedily as**

possible once it has been agreed as appropriate by the LADO or after the completion of enquiries by police and social care. Government Guidance – which is contained in Cumbria’s procedures – states that disciplinary hearings should be held within 15 working days of any allegation that does not require investigation, that disciplinary investigations should be completed within 10 working days, decisions on the outcome made within 2 working days and hearings established with 15 days.

- The fact that a person **tenders his or her resignation or ceases to provide their services** must not prevent an allegation from being followed up in accordance with these procedures and a conclusion reached. The LADO will advise on detailed responsibilities.
- **If the person is dismissed or has resigned in circumstances which they might otherwise have been dismissed, the organisation may have a duty to refer the individual to a professional body or the Independent Safeguarding Authority** to allow them to consider whether to bar the individual from working with children in the future.

The organisation **must retain a record of any investigation into an allegation on the staff member’s file until they reach retirement age or for ten years** (whichever is the longest). For this reason, the organisation cannot expunge records of disciplinary warnings from the staff member’s file after a specific period.