

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Academic year	Senior designated person	Nominated governor
20010-11	Alistair Day  Other designated persons: Chris May Debbie Macintosh Lisa Cavanagh Jon Grant Teresa Williams Helen Tovey	Anne Jeffrey

Last updated 30.9.10

Everyone in the Education Service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in;
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer **significant harm** and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at school

### Four categories of abuse:

- ***Neglect***
- ***Physical abuse***
- ***Sexual abuse***
- ***Emotional abuse***

All education settings must have in place systems designed to:

- Prevent unsuitable people working with, or coming into contact with, children and young people within the setting;
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor or unsafe practice;
- Identify instances where there are grounds for concern about a child/young person's welfare and take appropriate action to keep children safe;
- Contribute to effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children.

The guidance applies to people who are under 18 years of age.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, health and guidance by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The pupils' welfare is of paramount importance.

1.2 Moulton School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and the contribution it can make to protect and support children in school.

1.3 Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

There are three main elements to our policy:

- (a) **Prevention** (positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils)
- (b) **Protection** (by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are appropriately recruited, trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns)
- (c) **Support** (to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused)

## 2. School commitment

We recognise that because of their day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe possible 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 children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried;
- Include opportunities in the PSE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise, and stay safe from, abuse.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 **Everyone** in the school has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures:

- The designated senior person with lead responsibility for child protection and his/her deputies.
- The headteacher;
- The Governing Body

## **Broad areas of responsibility for the designated teacher**

### **(a) Referrals**

- To refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies;
- To act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- To liaise with the headteacher to inform him of any issues and ongoing investigations.

### **(b) Training**

- To recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral;
- To have a working knowledge of how local Child Protection teams operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- To ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy especially new or part-time staff;
- To ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise;
- To be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns
- To obtain access to resources and attend any relevant training courses at least every two years.

### **(c) Raising Awareness**

- To ensure the school's child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the governing body regarding this;
- To ensure parents see copies of the child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school in this to avoid conflict later;
- Where children leave the school to go to another establishment, to ensure that their child protection file is transferred separately from the main pupil file to the new establishment.

## **3.3 The role of the headteacher**

- To put in place procedures for handling cases of suspected abuse (including allegations against staff and volunteers) which are consistent with those agreed by the locally and easily available to all staff and volunteers for reference;
- To liaise with the nominated governor on child protection issues and school policy;
- To appoint a designated teacher to co-ordinate action within the school and to liaise with other agencies on suspected abuse cases;

### 3.4 The role of the governing body

- To have a child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with LA guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures;
- To operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers;
- To have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff;
- To have a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues;
- To ensure that appropriate training is undertaken on a regular basis;
- To remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay;
- To ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures in place which adhere to the latest regulations.

## 4. Procedures

Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or at risk of, significant harm, we will follow the procedures agreed locally.

The possibility of a child being abused may come to light in several ways, the two most common being:

- (i) The child him/herself makes a disclosure to a teacher (or one of his/her friends does);
- (ii) The member of staff has concerns about a particular individual (eg bruising, swelling, drawings or imaginative writing)

The situation in (i) is seemingly more clear cut but a sensitive approach is needed by the member of staff in both cases.

Even if, in (ii) above, the child offers a seemingly innocent explanation but the member of staff is not convinced of it, s/he should pass on his/her concerns to the designated teacher: the protection of the child is paramount and we need to err on the side of caution. Staff therefore need to report their concerns to the designated teacher at the earliest stage of concern/anxiety.

**Speed is important:** Social Services may need to intervene BEFORE the child goes home. Therefore, please pass on your concerns (accompanied by brief notes) to the designated teacher **VERY QUICKLY**. This will "trigger" one of the following sequences:

1. Immediate referral by the designated teacher to Social Services.

If the case is less clear cut, advice will be sought from appropriate agencies.

2. If the case is not referred, written notes must be made detailing the child's name, the date, nature of cause for concern, the advice from the agency consulted and so on. These notes will be placed in a locked file.
3. The school needs to adopt a monitoring role of the pupil potentially at risk.

**SOCIAL SERVICES HAVE STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CHILD ABUSE CASES; WE IN SCHOOL HAVE A STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY TO REFER ANY SUSPECTED CASES OF CHILD ABUSE.**

**All allegations of sexual abuse are jointly investigated by Social Services and the Police.**

### **5. Training and support**

Our school will ensure that the head teacher, the senior designated person and the governing body attend training relevant to their role.

The senior designated person needs to be trained at least every two years.

In addition, all members of staff need to be regularly updated on child protection issues and child protection will form part of the induction programme for all new members of staff.

### **6. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is vital in child protection matters. Clearly there is a “need to know” for staff who teach a child or have pastoral responsibility for him/her: the only purpose of confidentiality is to benefit the child.

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information with the designated teacher and investigative agencies. If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of staff **MUST NOT** agree to this. The child must be sensitively told that the member of staff has to refer the matter for the child’s own sake. The child should be reassured that the matter will only be disclosed to people who need to know.

When a referral is made, there is an expectation that parents will be informed **except in cases where this disclosure is likely to place the child at greater risk.**

### **7. Records and Monitoring**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within the school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Even if the issue appears minor and the child seems happy, it is good practice to make a note of your concerns and pass them to the designated person. Sometimes referrals are made based on a number of what appear, individually, to be minor concerns but which, cumulatively, become significant. Patterns are more likely to emerge where concerns are logged centrally.

All Child Protection records are kept in a secure file in the Head of KS3, 4 or 5 Offices.

## **8. Supporting Pupils at Risk**

Our school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and whilst this clearly cannot be overlooked, it needs to be handled sensitively.

It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

The school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- (a) the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- (b) 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;
- (c) the implementation of a positive behaviour management policy;
- (d) a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays;
- (e) regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families;
- (f) a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents even under difficult circumstances.

## **9. The contribution of the curriculum**

We will raise awareness of child protection issues through safety education as part of PSE. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle pupils will be taught to:

- Recognise different risks in different situations and then deciding how to behave responsibly.
- Judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable.
- Manage risk and make safer choices, including recognising when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being.
- Develop effective ways of resisting pressures including knowing when and where to get help.
- Develop skills to cope with emergency situations.

## **10. Bullying**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour and does, therefore, constitute child abuse. The school has an Anti-bullying policy and this complements this Child Protection Policy.

**Further Guidance on Child Protection is available in the Child Protection Policy Staff Guide.**

### **11. Internet Safeguard in school**

The internet at school is accessed through EMBC (East Midlands Broadband Consortium) which filters out the vast majority of unsuitable sites; the school also uses Ranger Security which prints the name of any pupil attempting to access an unsuitable site and blocks this.

The school has an "Internet Acceptable Use Policy" which is sent to all parents of new Year 7s with an accompanying letter. We ask parents and pupils to sign and return this letter.

### **12. Procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff**

There are Agreed Guidelines to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Please refer to the Guidance for Staff for further discussion.

### **13. Working with parents**

Discussing our concerns with parents can be a vital first step in establishing whether abuse is taking place.

We have a duty to inform parents that a referral is being made unless this will place the child at greater risk.