

Child Protection Policy

The policy of the school is to take every step in its power to safeguard the children in its care. We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department of Education.

1. Definition of Abuse

An abused child is a boy or girl under the age of 18 years who has suffered from or is believed to be at significant risk of neglect, assault, emotional abuse or sexual abuse.

Child abuse may be perpetrated by any adult including someone who has a position of trust or authority with respect to a child. These adults may include the parents of the child or any person known to the child or family who may have contact with the child. A child may also be the victim of abuse where the abuser is another child.

Child abuse may be the result of direct acts towards the child by any of those mentioned above, or by the failure of those who have responsibility for the child to provide reasonable care, or both.

2. Categories of Child Abuse

- **NEGLECT** is the chronic or acute neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure of any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including psychological failure to thrive.
- **ASSAULT** is the actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury {or suffering} to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation, or fabricated and induced illness.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE** is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child is deemed to be dependent and/or developmentally immature.
- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** is the actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment or rejection. This category should be used when it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Staff with Child Protection responsibilities

Of course all staff have Child Protection responsibilities but the following staff have specific responsibilities:

Robin Pine (Deputy Headteacher) — designated person for Child Protection. All Child Protection concerns should be passed to Robin without delay.

Karen Straw (Assistant Headteacher) — in Robin's absence Karen assumes responsibility

for Child Protection.

Mark Mallett (Headteacher) - Should Robin or Karen not be available then Mark will coordinate action on a specific case.

Dawn Chard (governor) — Dawn oversees the Child Protection work of the school on behalf of the governing body.

Principles of Child Protection

- We recognise that, because of their 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 (refer to Bullying and Behaviour Policy)

ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried

include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and danger.
- Prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. A child is a person under the age of eighteen. Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult the interests of the child must be paramount.
- The responsibility to refer children thought to be at risk rests with the person who has the concern.
- Should a pupil make an allegation of abuse against anyone to a teacher the teacher must make it clear that they cannot keep the information secret. At no time should a teacher promise complete confidentiality to a pupil in matters of Child Protection. It is important, however, for the teacher to stress they believe the child's story and want to help.
- The degree of confidentiality exercised is governed by the need to protect the child: the school has a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professions, especially investigative agencies. All agencies receiving information in the context of a Child Protection investigation must treat it as confidential and not disclose it for any other purpose without consulting the person who provided it.

Disclosures from children

If a child volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may be done obliquely rather than directly. An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and the staff member may be the only adult the child is prepared to trust.

Tact, sensitivity and reassurance will be required by staff responding to a disclosure but at the same time the child must understand that other adults will need to be informed. In order to prevent the child having to repeat the information staff must:

- Listen to the child, rather than directly question them.
- Never stop the child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Avoid offering alternative explanations for the child's worries.
- Make a note of the discussion taking care to record the timing, setting and the personnel present as well as what was said.
- Any discussion or information should be referred to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection.
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of a formal interview by the investigating team.
- Written records must be passed to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection who will ensure that these records are kept securely and separately from a pupil's main school file.

In the event of criminal proceedings being instituted, records of any interview with the child will need to be disclosed to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Action to be taken if is abuse is suspected

- Inform the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection. He may then seek advice from the Social Services locality team as to the appropriate action. Social Services, in accepting the referral become responsible for determining what action is to be taken, including advising parents. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will keep the Headmaster informed, where appropriate. The Chair of Governors will also be informed.
- It is not the responsibility of the school to make enquiries of, or to notify parents when abuse is suspected.

Robin Pine has the responsibility of deciding whether a case should be referred to the relevant Social Services Office or Avon and Somerset Police (Child Protection team). It may be that a Child Protection concern is recorded on the designated Child Protection form and monitored. This will also involve support from Hilary Taylor (Key Worker) who has the responsibility to access counselling services that are provided in school at Lake View House.

- The student will be monitored by the Head of Year, Robin Pine and Hilary Taylor and the decision to contact outside agencies will be seriously considered should the situation deteriorate. The records of all actions will be retained in the Child Protection file and destroyed after 5 years. This file is kept in a locked cabinet.
- Responding to child protection concerns requires a team approach. Staff must not

allow themselves to become isolated with individual cases.

How we work with other agencies

Robin Pine consults regularly on Child Protection matters with Social Services and Avon and Somerset Police, Child Protection Unit. Much of this liaison does not lead to direct referrals but ensures that decisions made in school are externally validated by Child Protection professionals.

Locality Based Support Services (LESS)

These meetings are held at school and bring together the Support Services that regularly work with our young people. These meetings are chaired by Robin Pine and are attended by: CMEO, Education Psychologist, Learning Support, Behaviour Support, Connexions Advisor and the School Nurse. The purpose of this meeting is to encourage the sharing of information between support services and to facilitate joint planning on how to move forward to support vulnerable students. These decisions will sometimes involve Child Protection referrals.

How we ensure that all staff are aware of their Child Protection responsibilities

Every two years all staff receive child protection refresher training(most recent in September 2010).

All staff (including trainee teachers) meet with Robin Pine in their first week in school to learn about Child Protection procedures and responsibilities at Chew Valley School.

Robin Pine and Karen Straw have undergone suitable Child Protection training organised by Bath & North East Somerset Council to the level expected for their responsibilities.

Whistle-blowing

Any member of staff who has a concern about the behaviour of any adult working in or visiting the school should raise their concern at the earliest opportunity with Robin Pine, Karen Straw or the Headteacher. Staff are advised that whistle-blowing cannot affect their employment rights which are protected in law.

Allegations against staff

Any incident where a pupil has grounds to believe that a member of staff has crossed the boundary of acceptable behaviour should be reported.

Action to be taken

Inform the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection. Where the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection is the person against whom the allegation is made, the Head should be informed directly.

If the Head is the subject of an allegation the Designated Senior Person for Child

Protection should be informed. He will then inform the Chair of Governors.

Staff Recruitment, Vetting and Barring.

The DCFS guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education came into force on 1st January 2007 and was given statutory force in the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.

Safeguarding checks must be carried out on all school staff before their appointment.

Recruitment packs must contain a clear statement that the post will be subject to the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and, as it includes access to children, an enhanced CRB check is required. The statement should remind candidates that the school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

At least one member of the interview panel should have completed Safer Recruitment training.

A single central register must be kept which includes the following information about all staff (including temporary, supply and volunteer staff):

- Name, address, date of birth
- Identity check and date completed (including supply teachers)
- Qualifications check
- List 99 check
- Enhanced CRB check for all staff in regular contact with children employed since March 2002 and all staff (irrespective of contact with children) employed since May 2006.
- Written confirmation by Supply Agencies that appropriate checks have been carried out and are satisfactory for a supply teacher.
- Evidence of 'permission to work' for non-EU nationals
- Further overseas criminal records check where appropriate.

Reviewed: January 2011

Date of next review: January 2012