

# CHAUNCY SCHOOL

## Child Protection Policy

Chauncy School aims to develop an ethos in which children feel secure, listened to and valued, and create an environment which provides opportunities for children to develop the skills that they need so that they are able to recognize, and stay safe from, abuse

## CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Statutory Framework</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>The Designated Senior Person</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>School Procedures</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>When to be Concerned</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Dealing with a Disclosure</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Confidentiality</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Record Keeping</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Allegations Involving School Staff/Volunteers</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose of a Child Protection Policy**

To inform staff, parents, volunteers and governors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children.

To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

### **Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures**

The school follows the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board - a guide to procedure and practice for all professional staff in Hertfordshire who work with children.

### **School Staff & Volunteers**

All school staff and volunteers, because they have daily contact with children, are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop.

They should be aware of the important role the school has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the appropriate referral process.

## 2. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

In order to protect children from harm the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- **The Children Act (1989)**
- **Education Act (2002) section 175**
- **The Children Act (2004)**
- **Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures (2007)**
- **DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006)**
- **DfES guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006)**

DfES guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse - these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

DfES guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2006) places the following responsibilities on all schools:

- Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions
- Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse
- A Designated Senior Person should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies
- Staff with designated responsibility for Child Protection should receive appropriate training

DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006) also states that:

**'All parents need to understand that schools and FE colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils or students, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures, and that a school or FE college may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare'.**

### **3. THE DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON**

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection in this school is Sara Mead

It is the role of the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection to:

- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection procedures
- Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff
- Ensure that the Headteacher is kept fully informed of any concerns
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to Children, Schools and Families)
- Liaise with CSF social care teams over suspected cases of child abuse
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential'
- Submit reports to, and ensure the school's attendance at, Child Protection Conferences
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support

A Deputy PSP should be appointed to act in the absence/unavailability of the DSP. The Deputy DPSP for Child Protection in this school is Steve Walton

#### **4. SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the Designated Senior Person

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.

The Designated Senior Person will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Children, Schools and Families. If it is decided to make a referral to Children Schools and Families this will be done with prior discussion with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the school has concerns, or who has been identified as being the 'Subject of a Child Protection Plan' (formerly referred to as the Child Protection Register) and a written record will be kept

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a Child Protection Plan changes school, the Designated Senior Person will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Senior Person at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file

#### **5. WHEN TO BE CONCERNED**

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he or she:

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with accidental injury.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).
- Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age/stage of development.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.
- Gives any other cause for concern to suggest that he or she may be suffering harm.

## **6. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE**

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff / volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Pass information to the Designated Senior Person without delay

## **SUPPORT**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Senior Person.

## **7. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- All staff in schools, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children Schools and Families and the Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

## **8. RECORD KEEPING**

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- Pass on to the DSP the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
- Ensure that all records need to be given to the Designated Senior Person promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer

## 9. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff/volunteer, the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the Headteacher.

If any member of staff/volunteer has reason to suspect that another member of staff/volunteer may have abused a child at the school, or elsewhere, they must immediately inform the Headteacher. They should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident/alleged incident.

If the concerns are about the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors should be contacted.

The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (07920 283106 or 07995 288271)

If the Headteacher decides that the allegation warrants further action through Child Protection Procedures he/she must immediately make a referral to CSF Client Services 01438 737511.

Under these circumstances the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made should not be informed of said allegation until future action is agreed with the Social Work Team Manager. It may be necessary to discuss appropriate steps to ensure that other children are not at risk. The allegation will be investigated in accordance with Section 10 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families the Headteacher and LADO will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

For further information see:

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures: Section 10

**NB:** Our LADO is Frazer Smith; his primary task is to manage allegations against professionals working with children.