



Safeguarding Children – an Introduction to Child Protection for Staff and Volunteers at The Spinney Primary School

“Through their day to day contact with pupils, and direct work with families, education staff have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse and neglect, and in referring concerns to the appropriate agency”

“Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe”

*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
DCSF, Jan 2007*

What we know

- Child abuse can take place in the home, at school or in any setting where children spend their time
- Children can be abused regardless of their age, gender, culture, disability, racial origin or sexual identity
- Children with special needs are especially vulnerable and more likely to be abused
- In almost all cases the abuser is someone known and often trusted by the child
- 1 or 2 children die each week as a result of abuse and neglect (NSPCC)
- At least half of the abuse goes undisclosed at the time it occurs - sometimes over lengthy periods of time
- 18.6% of secondary school children have been severely abused or neglected during childhood – equivalent to 973,000 children across the UK
- In 2008/9 21% of all calls to ChildLine were about parental alcohol misuse and 12% called about parental drug misuse
- 90% of domestic violence incidents children are in the same room. (Home Office Statistics).

Four categories of abuse

Physical Abuse - Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Neglect - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse - Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse - Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Staff responsibilities in child protection

Schools (including independent and non-maintained schools) and further education institutions have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils under the Education Act 2002. They should create and maintain a safe learning environment for children and young people, and identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

Working Together 2015

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 - Section 175 (Section 157 FE Colleges and Independent Schools) makes it a duty for all Local Authorities and schools to make arrangements to **safeguard and promote the welfare of all children**.

Schools must:

- Provide a safe environment for children and young people in their care
- Be able to identify those who are suffering, or likely to suffer, abuse or neglect
- Take appropriate action to make sure those children and young people are safe
- Refer concerns and play their part in multi-agency work to protect them

Governors as employers have a responsibility to ensure schools carry out these duties effectively.

If you have any concern about a pupil who may be being abused you must record your concern and pass it on to the designated person for child protection without delay. It is always better to say something than say nothing at all.

What to do if a child tells you they are the victim of abuse

- It is important that you listen and appear to have time.
- Stay calm and show that you are taking this seriously.
- You do not have to make any decision as to whether or not the child is telling the truth.
- You should reassure the child and tell him/her that she/he has done the right thing in telling you, that it is not his/her fault and that it has happened to other children.
- Let the child talk. Never ask leading or closed questions
- Never judge or condemn the alleged abuser.
- Explain the information will have to be passed on.
- Don't promise to keep the abuse secret or make any other promise you can't keep.
- If a child says they will only tell you if you promise not to pass the information on explain that this is not possible, even if this means they refuse to say anything more.
- Tell them what will happen next and what you intend to do

Record the conversation promptly and accurately on a logging concern sheet, date and sign it and pass it on to the Designated Person immediately

You need to know:

The designated persons for child protection are the **Headteacher Rachel Snape** and the **Deputy Head Lee Mawson**

If the designated person is unavailable you can go to another senior member of the leadership team Emily Garrill or Jess Lane

Logging concern forms are kept in the blue child protection box in the Team Room and are also available from the school office or from a senior member of staff.

The inter-agency procedures can be found in the Blue Child Protection Box in the Team Room

The child protection policy is available on the school website a hard copy can be produced for you by the school office. A hard copy is also kept in the Blue Child Protection Box in the Team Room

The whistle-blowing policy is available on the school website a hard copy can be produced for you by the school office. A hard copy is also kept in the Blue Child Protection Box in the Team Room

The designated governor for Child Protection is Mo Child – Chair of Governors

A board in the team room will provide you with additional information that you need to know regarding Whistleblowing Allegations against Staff and a list of useful contact numbers

Useful Contacts

Education Child Protection Service Advice Line Tel: 01223 703800

Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre (Social Care) Tel: 0345 045 5203

Police Central Referral Unit: Tel: 01480 847743

Further information

- Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board – Safeguarding Inter-Agency Procedures
www.cambslscb.org.uk

Available from: <http://publications.education.gov.uk>

- DCFS (now DfE) guidance – Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education – January 2007
- What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Has Been Abused - DOH publication
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

Remember - the most protective way to manage child protection concerns is to work together with others to discuss and refer concerns and to update and extend your training

Safer working practices

Basic principles

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour
- Avoid conduct which could lead to questions being asked about motivation and intention
- Work, and be seen to work in an open and transparent way
- Discuss and/or take advice promptly about concerns
- Follow the **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings** – clear boundaries and expectations
- All staff have a duty to keep children safe and protect them from physical and emotional harm
- All staff need to accept that their role involves responsibility and trust
- Safeguard young people and reduce risk of false allegations
- Employers should ensure there is a safe working environment for it's employees