

**ST PHILIP'S SCHOOL**  
**CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

St. Philip's fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have in place arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at St Philip's School have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the appropriate agency, normally children's social services.

This policy sets out St Philip's School's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

There are four main elements to our policy:

- 1. PREVENTION** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils, and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos.
- 2. PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- 3. SUPPORT TO PUPILS** who may have been abused.
- 4. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN.**

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school. Administrative staff, as well as teachers, can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

**1 PREVENTION**

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

St Philip's School will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, are listened to;
- ensure that children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

- ensure that staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse listed in the staff handbook;
- ensure that pupils do not have access to internet chat sites at school and that they know of the dangers of such sites;
- include in the curriculum and through school assemblies activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, and to know to whom to turn for help;
- include, in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills;
- aim to enhance confidence building, thinking independently and assessing risk.

## **2 PROCEDURES**

We will follow the procedures produced by the Area Child Protection Committee (RBK&C). These are summarised as follows:

### **Child Protection Procedures**

- ensure we have a lead member of staff for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role;
- ensure that every member of staff knows the name of the lead staff member responsible for child protection and their role;
- ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Headmaster;
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the school's website;
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences;
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter to other agencies immediately;
- ensure all records are kept securely by the Headmaster in a locked location;

- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- adopt a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.

### **The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection**

The school will:

- ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken the appropriate child protection training course, accredited by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The designated member of staff is the Headmaster, Mr Harry Biggs-Davison (child protection officer);
- ensure that this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance;
- recognise the importance of the role of the designated teacher and ensure that he has the time and training to undertake his duties;
- ensure that there are contingency arrangements, should the designated member of staff be unavailable. In the absence of Mr Biggs-Davison, Mrs Trisha Hitch, the Deputy Head, will act. She also undertakes regular training, at least every two years, in child protection;
- ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. St Philip's School has close links with Jenny Parris, who has provided staff INSET training at the school.

### **Responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer:**

The designated Child Protection Officer, Mr Harry Biggs-Davison, is responsible for:

- adhering to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and to the school's procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse;
- keeping written records of concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- ensuring that such records are kept confidentially, securely and are separate from pupils' records;
- ensuring that any pupil currently on the Child Protection Register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services;

- reporting to the DCSF in Darlington, within one month of leaving the school, any person whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children;
- involving external agencies when dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. This would occur when the designated Child Protection Officer, Harry Biggs-Davison, feels that the scale of the abuse is of sufficient gravity to warrant such action.

### **The role of the Designated Child Protection Officer**

Once an incident has been reported, the Child Protection Officer refers to the disclosure to the Child Protection Duty Team at Social Services. Any disclosure or suspicion of abuse will be reported to social services within 24 hours.

Tel: 020 7361 3013

If the pupil is already known to Social Services, the previously allocated Social Worker or the named team with responsibility should be contacted.

A CAF form should be sent with the Child Protection Front Sheet (if required) within 48 hours of the telephone referral.

If the CPO cannot reach the Child Protection Duty Team, he should contact the Emergency Duty Team.

Telephone number: 020 7361 3013

The referral will require details of:

- the reason for referral;
- the pupil, including name, address, date of birth, etc;
- any other agencies involved;
- the nature of the concerns;
- any urgent action required to ensure that the young person is safe from harm;
- any need for medical attention or hospital referral;
- whether the pupil's parent/carer is aware of the referral;
- any action required to gain parental consent.

The school's CPO will record the referral in the CP file and sign, date and record the name of the person they spoke to at Social Services.

Schools have no legal right to stop the pupil from going home at the end of the school day, so it is vital that referrals are made as early as possible, especially if it is believed that the pupil is not safe going home.

It is particularly important that any concerns about safeguarding and protecting a pupil are raised at as early a stage as possible to ensure that action can be taken prior to any School holiday breaks. This will enable checks to be made that systems are in place and relevant staff to attend any strategy meetings, conferences or to provide reports.

### **The Role of Governors and School Staff**

The school will ensure that every member of staff and every governor knows:

- the name of the designated person and his role, and the arrangements to be made in his absence;
- that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the procedures;
- where the Education Child Procedures are located.
- The school will provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, updated very three years at a minimum, so that they know their personal responsibility, the CP procedures, the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse, how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse.
- The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

### **Responding to a disclosure and referral procedures.**

If a disclosure is reported to you:

- ensure the pupil is safe and feels reassured. Respect his right to privacy and time to talk without interruption;
- listen to what is being said to you without pressure, judgement or horror. Do not ask leading questions. Always believe what the pupil has told you;
- reassure the pupil calmly and gently that he has done the right thing in telling you;
- do not promise confidentiality. You must inform the Child Protection Officer, Harry Biggs-Davison. (Headmaster) mobile: 07973 377664, Tel 020 7373 3944 email [Harry.Biggs-Davison@stphilipschool.co.uk](mailto:Harry.Biggs-Davison@stphilipschool.co.uk);
- explain to the young person that to safeguard him, you must pass on the information he is telling you. Tell them what will happen next, whom you will tell and when;

- do not ask the pupil to remove any item of clothing to show you any injuries;
- report the contents of the disclosure to the CPO as soon as possible. In his absence, contact Trish Hitch;
- if she is also absent, speak to another senior member of staff;
- record in a clear and precise way what the young person has told you as soon as possible while it is still fresh in your mind. In most cases, it is not appropriate to write down during the disclosure. Use actual words of sentences spoken by the pupil rather than an interpretation of what was said. Specific facts relating to named people, dates, places, times and context of disclosure should be recorded accurately;
- ensure you have signed your name legibly, and dated the recording. If any injuries are visibly shown, record where they are and what they look like;
- remember, all recordings must be accurate, factual and dated, as you may be required to produce the information as evidence for any further action on behalf of the Local Authority.

### **Allegations against the Headmaster, all staff and any volunteers**

A pupil may make an allegation against the Headmaster, any member of staff or a volunteer at the school. In such a case, the member of staff who receives the allegation should listen, record the details and explain that they will speak to the CPO immediately. (If the allegation involves the Child Protection Officer, the member of staff should contact the Deputy Head).

The Child Protection Officer / or Deputy Head will discuss the content of the allegation with the Officer for Safeguarding and Child Protection in the Local Authority, or the NSO (nominated senior officer) or the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

If the allegation concerning the Head Master is made to a member of staff, the member of staff must immediately contact the NSO, the Chair of Governors and the LADO.

The School will follow the LA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available from the Child Protection Officer.

### **Liaison with other Agencies**

The school will:

work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance and written reports at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences.

notify the local Social Services team:

- if it should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register (whether fixed term or permanently);
- if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days' duration from school (or one day following a weekend); (or as agreed as part of any child protection or core group plan).

### **Record Keeping**

The school will:

- keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children, noting the date, event and action taken, even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately.
- ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations.

### **Confidentiality and information sharing**

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the Headmaster or outside agency as required.

The Designated Person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

### **Communication with Parents**

The school will:

- undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this;
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.

### 3. SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- the content of the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see section 2);
- the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2);
- the school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour or the offence committed by the child, but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service;
- a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in a pupil's best interests to do so;
- recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, or drug or alcohol abuse, are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;
- vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Services **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**

When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Review Manager will also be informed.

## **Drug Use and Child Protection**

The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily enough in itself to initiate child protection proceedings, but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

where there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe that the young person's drug misuse may cause him to be vulnerable to other abuse, such as sexual abuse;
- to believe that the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- where the misuse is suspected to be prompted by serious parent/carer drug misuse.

## **Children of Drug Abusing Parents**

Further enquiries and/or further action will be taken when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol; abuse by a child's parents or carers in the following circumstance:

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use, including injection);
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- Children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

## **4. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

- The school will operate safe recruiting practices, including ensuring CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DFES January 2007
- The school will consult with the designated LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Local Safeguarding Children's Board and DFES guidance above

- The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full, even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school, and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents, as advised by the Local Authority's Code of Conduct.

## **5. OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

### **Physical Intervention**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that it must always be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury themselves, another person or property

### **Bullying**

Our policy on bullying is set out in the staff handbook and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### **Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in the staff handbook, and is reviewed annually by the governing body. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of children, both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

### **Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems are particularly sensitive to signs or abuse.

## 6. GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body of St Philip's recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- designate a governor for child protection, who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice, and champion child protection issues. The Governor responsible for child protection at St. Philip's is .....
- ensure an annual report is made to the governing body on child protection matters, to include changes affecting CP policy and procedures, child protection training received and the number of incidents/cases (no names);
- ensure that this policy is annually updated and reviewed.

### Extended Schools and Before and After School Activities

In the case of extended school facilities and before and after school activities under the supervision and management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing body will seek assurances that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection, and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

The policy was ratified on .....

And will be reviewed on .....

Signature of the Headmaster .....

Signature of the Chairman of Governors .....

Signature of the Governor responsible for Child Protection .....