

**Child Protection**

**Policy**

Created May 2016

Review May 2017

**Christ Church Academy fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.**

**Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:**

1. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.

2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

3. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

4. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

**OUR ETHOS**

The child’s welfare is of paramount importance. Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our school will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that staff at our school play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘*it could happen here*’ where safeguarding is concerned.

All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

Throughout our curriculum we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills

At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013).

**1. Recruitment:**

a) The school will ensure that key staff members are trained in Safer Recruitment; Head Teacher and Deputy Head.

b) Recruitment processes; advertising, information provided, short listing, interviewing and up take of references; will adhere to the recommendations made to schools in the Bichard enquiry.

c) The school will apply the same rigorous procedures for all levels of recruitment; teaching and non-teaching.

d) The induction process and subsequent performance management process are all designed to promote child-protection.

**2. Raising Awareness:**

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

a) Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

b) Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

c) Include opportunities in the PHSCE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

d) Staff will undertake regular input on Child Protection; including the school’s procedures for reporting concerns; as part of the induction process and every year in a staff meeting. Training will include spotting signs of abusive behaviour in colleagues and how to report concerns.

**3. Systems for reporting:**

We will follow the procedures set out by Bradford’s Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014) to:

a) Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role; currently **Mr Richard Ireland and Miss Grimshaw**

b) Additional staff have also received CP training – **Mrs Nightingale, Mrs Foster and Mrs Morris**

c) Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.

d) Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.

e) Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.

f) 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.

g) Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.

h) Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.

i) Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.

j) Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

k) Train staff to follow the school flowchart (Appendix 5) for reporting Child Protection issues.

l) Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

**4. Supporting pupils:**

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

a) The content of the curriculum. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued. The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

b) Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.

c) Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

**5. Supporting/Informing Parents**

The Child protection Policy is available for parents, governors and staff to download on the school website. The school has an open and honest approach to CP issues and values the importance of keeping parents informed at all stages of the process

Parental consent is sought except where it is deemed that this may put the child/children/family member at a greater risk of harm.

In circumstances where Children’s Services approach the school for information, then the school takes its lead with regard to parental consent from them.

**6. Role Of Governing Body:**

The named Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding is Mark Watson.

He is informed about the current CP & Safeguarding situation through Headteacher’s Briefing document at Governors meetings. Information on number of pupils subject to Child Protection Plans and any new referrals are included within this report.

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body, in particular the named governor, to keep up to date with current safeguarding practices and policy. This should take to form of twice yearly meeting with named person and attendance at specific governor training for CP & Safeguarding.

The Governing body are also responsible for ensuring that:

a) The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available publicly via our school website and has been written in line with Local Authority guidance.

b) The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015).

c) A member of the senior leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that there is an alternate and appropriately trained member of staff identified to deal with any issues in the absence of the senior designated professional. There will always be cover for this role.

d) All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy and the staff code of conduct.

e) All staff undertake appropriate child protection training that is updated regularly.

f) Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with statutory guidance.

g) Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of ’Keeping Children Safe in Education’ DfE (2016).

h) They remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.

**7. Staff Concerns/Allegation Against Staff Members:**

In a vast majority of cases CP concerns arise as a result of issues based in or around the home environment and involve family members or friends. However, it is important to point out that all staff must be vigilant and aware of how to proceed should a member of staff be subject to a CP related allegation.

The specific guidelines and procedures for such a situation are contained within the **Managing Allegations of Abuse** document produced by Education Bradford in Sept 2006. Detailed guidance and step by step flow charts clearly identify what to do should you be concerned – documents found in class visitor induction packs.

We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined Part 4 of *‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’*, DfE (2016) are adhered to.

**8. Creating a safe environment:**

The Child Protection policy is part of a set of policies and procedures through which the school aims to create a safe environment for all its children. These policies and procedures are regularly monitored and revised to ensure that best practice is adhered to.

For additional information and guidance please refer to the following additional policies and support documents:

* ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ DfE (2016)
* Governors Code of Conduct
* Ethical Code of Conduct – individually signed by all staff and governors
* Staff Discipline
* Positive Handling
* Behaviour Management
* Sex and Relationship Education
* Managing Allegations of Abuse – Guidelines and Procedures
* Positive Handling – Guidance (Ed Bfd)
* Care & Control – The Use of Force (Ed Bfd)
* Forced Marriage Advice for Schools (Ed Bfd)

**APPENDIX 1.**

**Definitions of Child Abuse**

An abused child is a boy or girl under the age of 17 who has suffered from physical injury, physical neglect, failure to thrive, emotional or sexual abuse, that the person who has had custody, charge or care of the child either caused or knowingly failed to prevent. Having custody, charge or care includes any person, in whatever setting, who, at the time, is responsible for that child.

**Physical Abuse**

Physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

**Sexual Abuse**

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend, and to which they are unable to give informed consent; or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

**Neglect**

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example by exposure to any kind of danger including cold or starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child’s health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

**Emotional Abuse**

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment; this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

**APPENDIX 2:**

**Procedures to follow in the event of concern:**

Staff are in contact with children all day and are in a position to detect possible abuse. They must not think that by voicing concern they are necessarily starting procedures. The criteria should be that they have ‘reasonable suspicion’ and under the Children Act, 1989, this definition has been extended to include ‘or may suffer in future’.

If a child discloses abuse or staff are suspicious, there are four things to do:

*1. Report immediately to the Designated Person or member of Senior Leadership Team*

*2. Do not speak to the parents*

*3. Do not promise the child that it will be kept a secret*

*4. Make a written note of name of child, time and date, details of the incident, your name*

It is very important in these cases that prompt and correct procedures are followed under Bradford and Airedale Child Protection Committee’s procedures.

Staff will be informed of the correct procedures by the Named Person.

The reporting teacher will be told of any further action taken i.e. Social Service referral, monitor etc. If the reported case is taken up and investigated by an external agency, then any meetings, case conferences or action taken will be followed through and the teacher concerned informed.

Staff have an important role in hearing what children have to say. The school can provide a neutral place where the child feels it is safe to talk. Sensitivity to the disclosure is vital. Staff must listen carefully to what the child is saying, treat it seriously, and value what they say.

Children may feel they will not be believed, or that they will be punished. Staff will need to say that whatever has happened it is not their fault. Fear of the consequences of telling is very common. It can be very tempting to offer a promise of confidentiality to the child. This is not realistic. The child needs to hear the truth about what will happen, together with a commitment to support the child. It is crucial not to ask leading questions. Our role is to enable the child to speak and then know what to do next.

A record of children that have been the subject of Social Services or Child Protection Referral is kept in the administration office. These records include all children, who, for whatever reason, need to be monitored. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on this register if it is considered relevant.

In the event of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or family support worker not being available to deal with an emergency involving Child Protection issues, then the teacher must speak to a someone at Children's Social Care Initial Contact Point on **01274 437500 or 01274 431010** for advice.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Children’s Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the SDP and/or the Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children’s Services, or the police if:

* the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their alternate and the Headteacher are all unavailable;
* they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil’s safety.

Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point should contact Children’s Services directly with their concerns.

**APPENDIX 3:**

**Signs and Symptoms**

This is intended as a guide. Please remember that the presence of one or more factors does not necessarily give proof that child abuse has occurred. It may, however, indicate that investigation should take place.

* Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed
* Incompatible explanations
* Constant minor injuries
* Unexplained bruising:
  + Bruise marks in or around the mouth
  + Black eyes, especially if both eyes are black and there are no marks to forehead or nose
  + Grasp marks
  + Finger marks
  + Bruising of the ears
  + Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back)
  + Differing age bruising
* Bite marks
* Burns and scalds
* Cigarette burns
* General physical disability
* Unresponsiveness in the child
* Soiling and wetting
* Change in behavioural patterns
* ‘Frozen’ look
* Attention seeking
* Apprehension
* Antisocial behaviour
* Unkempt appearance
* Sexually precocious behaviour
* Sexualised drawings and play
* Sudden poor performance in school
* Poor self-esteem
* Self-mutilation
* Withdrawal
* Running away
* Reluctance to return home after school
* Resistance to PE (undressing)
* Resistance to school medicals
* Difficulty in forming relationships
* Confusing affectionate displays
* Poor attendance – repeated infections etc.

**APPENDIX 4:**

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The senior designated teacher’s role (named person) is to follow the procedures set down by the Bradford and Airedale Child Protection Committee. This teacher will work in conjunction with the head teacher to ensure that referrals are dealt with efficiently and that all contacts are recorded. It is the duty of the designated teacher to attend case conference reviews, inform the head teacher of review dates if it is considered more appropriate for the head teacher to attend and collate any reports required for a review.

The head teacher also has a crucial role to take in a Child Protection referral. The head teacher will be available for consultation and advice at all stages of a referral. The head teacher will take a supervisory role in the procedure of a referral and will be available to attend reviews, with or without the designated teacher should it be deemed appropriate.

The governing body will approve the school’s Child Protection Policy, review the policy annually, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and be satisfied that the policy is being implemented. The governing body should ensure that a designated teacher and a nominated governor for child protection are in place. The governing body should recognise the importance of the designated teacher and perform a supporting role. The governing body should satisfy itself that the designated person receives the relevant training. It recognises the important role that the school plays in teaching children self protection skills and the encouragement of responsible attitudes to adult life through the Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education curriculum. The governing body will ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment and discipline policies which comply with the ‘Safer recruitment policy’.

The nominated governor for child protection will be familiar with the Bradford and Airedale Child Protection Committee’s procedures, Education Bradford procedures and guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills. The nominated governor will work with the designated safeguarding lead to produce and review the child protection policy and procedures. It will be the duty of the nominated governor to liaise with relevant agencies if any allegations are brought against the school or staff. The nominated governor will undertake any necessary training. The nominated governor will ensure that child protection is an annual agenda item for governing body consideration.

For reasons of confidentiality the governing body or the nominated governor will not be given details that relate to specific child protection referrals.

**APPENDIX 5: FLOW CHART OF PROCEEDURES**

**Christ Church Academy**

**Child Protection Procedures Flow Chart**

1. On the discovery or suspicion of child abuse the following procedures should be followed:
2. Complete pastoral concern form
3. Give concern form to lead designated senior person for child protection
4. Lead designated senior person, where appropriate contacts social services for advice or agrees action from another named person.
5. The lead designated senior person is then updated on case before end of same school day.
6. All of the above is documented and kept in the child’s file.