



Child Protection Policy

Policy:	Child Protection Policy			Page:	1 of 13
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The second aim of our Mission Statement is:-

To foster happy caring relationships within the school which enable individuals to grow in confidence, dignity and self esteem.

St Vincent's School supports the right of every child to feel safe and secure. The school also concerns itself with issues that relate to each child's personal health, safety and well being. We aim to provide an environment in which there is mutual respect and one in which children can approach adults for help without fear and assured in the knowledge that they will be listened to sympathetically.

As always Christ's ministry as shepherd must be most evident in all our actions and particularly in our approach to Child Protection.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Critical Incident Procedure
- E-Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Prevent Duty agenda – What we do
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation
- Promoting British Values
- Social Media Policy
- Summary of Specific Safeguarding Issues

DfE documents:

- Use of reasonable force – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation
- The Prevent Duty
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- ICO Bring your own device (BYOD)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools

NATURE OF CHILD PROTECTION

This policy relates to the protection of the child from neglect and abuse by adults who are entrusted with their care. Accepted definitions of abuse are printed in Appendix 1.

At St Vincent's various areas of the curriculum help in raising pupils' awareness and promote the development of strategies to enable children to protect themselves and protect others.

The following guidance supports the Cheshire Child Protection Procedures:-

Schools are equal partners with other agencies involved in Child Protection work, and **can** and **should** initiate action if they are concerned about particular children.

Where a teacher is concerned that a child has sustained a **suspicious** injury or believes a child has been abused an immediate **referral** must be made.

The referral route is through the Headteacher.

In a situation where the Headteacher is not available or the teacher, against the wishes of the Headteacher, feels a referral should be made and the matter is urgent, then referral to **Social Services** should be made immediately by the member of staff who has cause for concern. The Headteacher must be briefed as soon as possible afterwards.

The Governors are aware of the above procedure.

THE ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION DESIGNATED TEACHER

The following guidance has been based on the guidance and good practice outlined in the following documents:-

- WBC Manual of Child Protection Procedures
- OFSTED Handbook for the Inspection of Schools
- DES Circular 4/88 Child Protection
- Education (School Records) Regulations 1989

and DES Circular 17/89 Working Together 1991 Under the Children Act 1989; Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2015

The recommendation of Circular 4/88 is that every school is to designate a senior member of staff as having responsibility, under the procedures established in the manual, for co-ordinating action within the school and for liaison with other agencies.

The Designated Person at St Vincent's School is: Mrs Anne-Marie Worrall

The Designated Governor for Child Protection is: Mrs Gill Higgins

It is the role of the designated person to:-

- Inform all staff in school, ie. teachers, classroom assistants, kitchen staff, mid-day assistants, caretaker, administration staff etc. of the role of the designated teacher.
- Inform other people of your designation.
Others may include:- Educational Welfare Officer; the Governing Body; Social Services; School Nurse and Medical Officer; Educational Psychologist.
- Ensure that the school has a minimum of two copies of the WBC Manual of Child Protection Procedures. One of these is kept in the Headteacher's Office, the other is kept in the School Office.
- Ensure the Manual is updated.
- Ensure the school has an agreed policy for Child Protection.
- Attend relevant training and raise staff awareness.
- Act as Co-ordinator of action when child abuse is suspected. This involves:-
 - advising the staff
 - liaison with Social Services and Police
 - seeking advice
 - making referrals
 - ensuring adequate records are kept
 - supporting staff who suspect abuse or have handled a disclosure.
 - to ensure contemporary notes are kept.

- Develop a system of recording Child Protection information and communicating these to those who need to know.
- Link with the EPR Co-ordinator, Deputy Headteacher and outside agencies on Child Protection initiatives. The aim of such initiatives being to develop the knowledge and skills of children on issues relating to their own protection or that of others.
- The **Deputy Headteacher** is also aware of the above duties in situations when the Child Protection designated teacher, **Mrs Worrall**, is unavailable.

RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Child Protection records are kept secure and it is stated who has legitimate access to them.

CONTEMPORANEOUS NOTES

These are vital and more valued than those made later. Notes need to be made at the time, dated and signed. Staff may also record notes on the O Track system under guidance from the Headteacher when parental concerns have been discussed. Concerns regarding parents or other adults should NOT be recorded in this way and should be stored by the Headteacher.

DISCLOSURES

When a child discloses information it is done so in the probable expectation that help will be provided - that things will be made better. There will be a point in a disclosure when it is necessary to tell the child that this information needs to be shared with other professionals.

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

The School Website outlines the statutory duties of the school in Child Protection proceedings.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school, staff and governors. Teaching Assistants, Mid-day supervisors, secretaries, technicians as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

The following paragraph is included in our School Prospectus:-

Because of the day to day contact with children, schools are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. Parents should be aware, therefore, that where it appears to a member of staff that a child may have been abused, the school is required, as

part of the Cheshire Child Protection procedures, to discuss their concerns with the Social Services Department

The delegated member of staff responsible for Child Protection is:
Mrs Worrall.

ENTITLEMENT

1. The school will, through its approach to equal opportunities, EPR and through the “Come and See” RE. Syllabus encourage children to be aware that their feelings have equal value to those of adults. Adults are encouraged to respect the rights of children and **not** lead children to believe, absolutely, that they must **always** obey adults without question.
2. Children are consulted and involved in the development of codes of behaviour within the school. In doing so, they are encouraged to share their feelings with peers and adults.
3. Staff incorporate into curriculum areas opportunities for children to discuss matters relating to their own protection and their right to feel secure and safe.
4. Staff respect the private nature of information relating to issues of protection of individual children.
5. The school recognises that, in order to feel safe and secure, children need to trust the adults in the school community. Building positive, trusting relationships is seen as fundamental to the teaching and learning process.
6. It is accepted that an adult chosen by a child to disclose something will not necessarily be their class teacher.
7. The school is mindful that staff may become vulnerable to allegations of abuse in the course of their work. The school will, with the guidance offered by the **LEA - ‘Code of Conduct for Teachers’**, assist staff in developing strategies to protect themselves from ungrounded allegations in this respect.

IMPLEMENTATION

The school has a set of procedures to be followed by all adults in the school community whenever there is concern for the safety of a child. The procedures, in the form of a flow diagram (Actions for Schools), are included in the Safeguarding Policy, posted in the school office, staffroom and the MDA staff have a copy (Appendix 2).

For further information see **Guidance and Procedures**.

ASSESSMENT

There is a minimum of one meeting a term for all staff to discuss child protection issues. Issues may also be raised during SLT morning briefings where necessary.

There is ongoing liaison within the school to assess and monitor:-

- ★ individual cases
- ★ the effectiveness of this policy
- ★ the school's relationship with outside agencies.
- ★ training needs.

RESPONSIBILITY

It will be the responsibility of the designated person to arrange and lead the above assessment.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or whenever changes in legislation or Local Authority requirements demand it.

The Governing Body of the School will consider Child Protection issues and their implications for this policy on an annual basis. For this item, the Head teacher will report upon levels of child protection referrals made by the school during the past year, training undertaken by school staff and governors and any changes in legislation or national/local guidance. Otherwise, this policy will be reviewed and updated in Spring term 2017.

_____ **Chair of Governors** _____ **Date**

_____ **Head teacher** _____ **Date**

POLICY IN ACTION

Following A Disclosure

If a child approaches you to disclose abuse:-

1. Send immediately for another adult to release you in order to listen quietly to the child.
 - ★ If you are the only adult in charge in the classroom or a group of children, send written word via another child to the nearest teacher or member of staff.
 - ★ If there is another adult with you, advise the member of staff that you are withdrawing with that child until further notice.
 - ★ If you receive 'written word' from any adult go to the aid of that adult immediately. Or arrange immediately for another teacher to go.
2. Let the child tell you what they want to tell you in private. Do not ask leading questions and do not pressure the child to disclose more than they wish to. **Do not promise** not to tell anyone what he/she has told you. Keep the interview as short as possible consistent with meeting the child's immediate needs for comfort and security.
3. As soon as possible after the conversation, make a written verbatim (if possible) record of what was said, by whom and who was present. Date, time and sign this record.
4. Refer the incident as soon as possible to the designated person (Mrs Worrall).

In his absence, urgent cases should be referred to the Deputy Headteacher or a member of the Senior Management Team (Mrs Millington, Mrs Harding) or the SENDCo Mr Hughes.
5. **Do not** discuss the matter with anyone else in the school or the child's family.

In cases of suspicion of abuse, you should discuss concerns with the designated person – Mrs Worrall. She will decide on a course of action, which may involve observation of the child or referral to outside agencies for advice.

In all cases, work through the designated person – Mrs Worrall or Mrs Edwards in her absence.

For advice on what to do if none of the people mentioned in 4 are present, see attached **Help Sheet**.

CHILD PROTECTION HELP SHEET

Designated Senior Person – Anne-Marie Worrall - Headteacher

In her absence:

- Deputy Headteacher - **Kathryn Edwards**
- SLT – **Louise Millington, Maria Harding**
- SENDCo – **Martin Hughes**
- Child Protection Governor – **Gill Higgins**

For advice in the absence of all the above people contact:-

Social Services, Service Reception Team **444239**

LEA GUIDELINES (RED BOOK)

One copy of the LEA Child Protection Manual of Procedures.

In cases of medical emergency:-

1. Seek medical help / send child to hospital.
2. Contact Social Services - 444239 to discuss liaison with the parents of the child.
3. Emergency Duty Team (out of normal office hours) – 01925 444400.

REMEMBER

DO NOT APPROACH THE CHILD'S FAMILY WITHOUT FIRST SEEKING ADVICE.

DO NOT PROMISE A CHILD THAT YOU WILL NOT TELL ANYONE WHAT THEY HAVE DISCLOSED TO YOU. YOU CAN REASSURE THEM THAT YOU WILL ONLY TELL PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP THEM, BUT YOU HAVE A DUTY TO PASS ON INFORMATION DISCLOSED TO YOU.

KEEP CONTEMPORARY FACTUAL RECORDS IF YOU ARE CONCERNED.

OBSERVE CONFIDENTIALITY AT ALL TIMES

APPENDIX 1 - CHILD ABUSE

1 DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

1.1 A child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse by the parent when the basic rights and needs of a child are

Not being met either by acts of omission or commission.

1.2 The basic rights and needs of a child are:-

→ freedom and protection from sexual abuse and preventable physical harm

→ basic physical care encompassing adequate nourishment, warmth, clothing, shelter, health care and consistency and continuity of approach

→ emotional security including:-

★ love, affection, interest

★ security, permanence, stability, social support and boundaries in which to grow and develop self discipline

★ encouragement to develop skills to realise potential intellectually, educationally and recreationally.

1.3 A child will be considered to be abused or at risk of abuse when some definable behaviour by the parent or a member of the household or some specific behaviour by a child, causes or is likely to cause harm to the child. The definable behaviour may be physical, sexual or emotional and either by an act of omission or commission. The harm to a child should be demonstrable or confidently expected on the basis of professional judgement.

1.4 Where a child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse there is an inescapable mandate for professional intervention on the grounds that the basic rights and needs of a child are not being met.

1.5 The following five categories of abuse represent those most commonly encountered in practice. These categories are not comprehensive, neither are they mutually exclusive. What is necessary is to protect, not classify a child.

2 THE CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

2.1 Physical Injury

Any form of physical injury to a child including poisonous substances, attempted drowning and smothering, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted, or not prevented by a parent or any other member of the household.

The diagnosis of physical injury will normally be both medical and psycho-social, and in some instances, circumstances.

2.2 Physical Neglect and Failure to Thrive

Any form of persistent and severe neglect to a child including exposure to any kind of danger, cold or starvation which results or may result in a serious impairment of the child's health, physical and intellectual development which may require medical treatment. The diagnosis for physical neglect and failure to thrive will normally be both medical and psycho-social.

2.3 Emotional Ill-treatment and Non-organic Failure to Thrive

Any form of behaviour to a child which seriously undermines the behavioural and emotional development of a child. This may include:-

- ➔ persistent hostility
- ➔ persistent failure to respond
- ➔ seriously unrealistic expectations - these may be over - or under - estimation
- ➔ grossly inappropriate stimulation of a child's aggression or sexuality
- ➔ serious exploitation of a child for gratification of another's needs
- ➔ grossly inconsistent care.

The diagnosis will normally be medical and psycho-social.

2.4 Sexual Abuse

Any knowledge or suspicion of a child being involved in inappropriate sexual activities with or not prevented by the parent or any other member of the household.

Inappropriate is where:-

- ➔ a child does not truly comprehend
- ➔ a child is unable to give informed consent
- ➔ the act violates the social taboos of family life
- ➔ the act is against the law.

Such an investigation will be undertaken jointly by Police and Social Services and where appropriate with a medical examination. Where such investigations are inconclusive, a psycho-social assessment and sometimes circumstantial evidence may indicate reasonable grounds for suspicion. (See Potential Abuse - Schedule 1 Offender).

2.5 Potential Abuse

Potential abuse is where serious professional concern is expressed by an Agency. Some of the situation which fall within this category are:-

- ➔ any child entering a household in which another child has been harmed and is on the child protection register
- ➔ any child in a household into which a convicted sexual offender has contact or to reside or where an adult known or suspected of having abused a child has entered
- ➔ any child entering or born into a household where there has not been any abuse but where medical, psycho-social, and psychiatric assessments indicate a high degree of risk that the child might be abused in the future. A child where a parent or a member of the household seriously abuses drugs or alcohol may fall into this category

APPENDIX 2

POLICY IN ACTION

Following A Disclosure

If a child approaches you to disclose abuse:-

1. Send immediately for another adult to release you in order to listen quietly to the child.
 - ★ If you are the only adult in charge in the classroom or a group of children, send written word via another child to the nearest teacher or member of staff.
 - ★ If there is another adult with you, advise the member of staff that you are withdrawing with that child until further notice.
 - ★ If you receive 'written word' from any adult go to the aid of that adult immediately. Or arrange immediately for another teacher to go.
2. Let the child tell you what they want to tell you in private. Do not ask leading questions and do not pressure the child to disclose more than they wish to. Do **not promise** not to tell anyone what they have told you. Keep the interview as short as possible consistent with meeting the child's immediate needs for comfort and security.
3. As soon as possible after the conversation, make a written verbatim (if possible) record of what was said, by whom and who was present. Date, time and sign this record.

4. Refer the incident as soon as possible to the designated person (Mrs Worrall).

In his absence, urgent cases should be referred to the Assistant Headteacher- Mrs Maria Harding or a member of the Senior Management Team.

5. Do not discuss the matter with anyone else in the school or the child's family.

In cases of suspicion of abuse, you should discuss concerns with the designated person – Mrs Worrall. She will decide on a course of action, which may involve observation of the child or referral to outside agencies for advice. In all cases, work through the designated person – ***Mrs Worrall***.