

Toll Bar Primary School

Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

(From “Every Child Matters” 2003)

How organisations safeguard people and promote emotional health and well being is the focus of the Common Inspection Framework introduced after The Children Act 2004. This legislation places a duty on key partners to work together to provide a coherent service which places the child at the school.

Toll Bar Primary School fully recognises the responsibility it has under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at the school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to Childrens and Young Persons Services (C&YPS).

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, including community education staff and governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

PREVENTION

1 Introduction

The health, safety and welfare of our pupils is of paramount importance to all adults working in the School. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our School.

Child abuse takes a variety of forms:

1. **Physical** abuse involves hitting, shaking or other treatment of a child that can cause actual bodily harm.
2. **Sexual** abuse involves forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact situations, such as showing children pornography.
3. **Emotional** abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of children, such as frightening them, or putting them in positions of danger. It is also abuse to convey to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.
4. Children are also abused if they are **neglected**. This could involve failure to provide proper food and warmth, but it might also be failure to see to the emotional well-being of the child.

In our School, we respect all children. The atmosphere of the School is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide a wide range of opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.

We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in under achievement and therefore strive to ensure that all children make good progress.

- 1.1 The School recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.
- 1.2 The school will therefore:
 - 1.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are given the opportunity and encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
 - 1.2.2 Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
 - 1.2.3 Include in the curriculum, emotional literacy 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;
 - 1.2.4 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
 - 1.2.5 Will work towards the “Every Child Matters” agenda with reference to the 5 outcomes for children.

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy ensures that all staff in the School are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- to provide an ethos and learning environment where children feel secure and are given the opportunity and encouragement to talk and be listened to.
- to establish the actions the School must take to ensure that children remain safe, at home as well as at the School.
- to ensure children know that there are adults in the School whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- to include in the curriculum, emotional literacy activities, and opportunities for PSHE Miss Dorothy.com which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse/harm and to know to whom to turn to for help
- to 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
- to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse
- to ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues
- to lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection

- to identify children who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm
- to work towards the “ Every Child Matters” agenda with reference to the 5 outcomes for children
- to be aware of e-safety – see e-safety policy

PROCEDURES

We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB).

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the school to:

-
- Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken appropriate safeguarding (child protection) training, is fully conversant with the procedures of the LA Children’s services and the content of the current Children and Young Peoples Plan ensures that the School takes action to support any child who may be at risk. The designated member of staff in school is the Headteacher or in his/her absence the Deputy Head.
- Recognise the importance of the role of the designated teacher and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties and responsibilities.
- Ensure training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” Ref 04217-2006BKT-EN.
- Ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available e.g. Deputy Head.
- Ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a safeguarding (child protection) specialist when managing complex cases.

Ensure that staff:

- Know the name of the designated person and her/his role and responsibility.
- Implement the policy. A copy of the Child Protection Policy is given to all staff and will be discussed at the induction of any new staff.
- Have sufficient resources and time are to carry out their responsibilities effectively
- Know that they have an individual responsibility for referring safeguarding (child protection) concerns.
- Receive training at the point of their induction, and be updated every three years as a minimum, so that they know
 - their personal responsibility,
 - DSCB procedures,
 - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
 - how to support and to respond to a child who discloses significant harm
- know their duty and are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children by a colleague and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies

The Headteacher is the Child Protection Co-ordinator but she may delegate this responsibility in some circumstances.

The school will:

4. In Liaison with Other Agencies

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

notify the allocated Social Worker if:

- a pupil on the child protection register has been excluded (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.

5. With Record Keeping

- 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 C&YPS immediately; use the dedicated sheets for recording.
- ensure all records are kept secure and in a locked location separate from the child's personal file in the Headteacher's office.

6. With Confidentiality and information sharing

- ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or outside agency as required.
- ensure that the Head teacher or Designated Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- ensure that all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- ensure that all staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child confidentiality.

7. Communication with Parents

- 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 safeguarding children (child protection) by setting out its obligations in the school brochure.

SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK

1. The school recognises that:

- Children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. It may have a detrimental effect on their well-being.
- It may be the only safe, stable and secure environment in the lives of children at risk. This may impact on their behaviour, which may be challenging and defiant, or they may become withdrawn.
- 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:
 - Its ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued without apportioning blame
 - The behaviour policy aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth.
 - Liaison with other appropriate agencies, which support the pupil.
 - A commitment to develop supportive relationships with parents/carers whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so.
 - Recognising that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
 - Vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying appropriate agencies as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.
 - When a pupil on the child protection register transfers to another school, information will be transferred to the new school immediately.

2. Children with Special Educational Needs

The school recognises 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 of abuse.

3. Procedures to be followed if an adult has concerns about a child

Under Section 47 of the Children Act the local authority has a duty to investigate a situation where it has 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in it's area is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.'

All adults in the School share responsibility for keeping our children safe. We may occasionally report concerns which, on investigation, prove unfounded.

In the event of a member of staff having a child protection concern about a pupil s/he will inform the Designated member of staff and record accurately the event(s) giving rise to the concern.

The School recognises the importance of staff listening to children at all times, and is particularly concerned to ensure that any child who wishes to disclose abuse should be supported in doing so. Staff should be aware that the way they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence and any subsequent proceedings.

Staff must:

- Listen to the child rather than directly ask questions
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events
- Make a record of the discussion, taking care to record timing, setting and personnel present as well as what is said.
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of any later interview
- Inform the child that they may have to pass the information on

4. Confidentiality

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat it accordingly. We only pass on information to appropriate persons. We inform the child at all stages as to who is involved and what information we have given them.

We comply with the government and LA requirements with regard to confidentiality. The files we keep on pupils are open to the respective parents. Information from third parties will not be disclosed without their prior consent.

Staff must not keep to themselves any information about abuse which a child gives them; they are required by law to pass this information on. If a member of staff suspects that a child may be a victim of abuse, they should not try to investigate, but should immediately inform the CPC about their concerns.

Any action that the CPC takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LEA Child Protection guidelines.

5. 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 sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause;

- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to abuse
- to believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is placing them at significant risk
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse

6. Children of Drug Using Parents and Alcohol abusing parents

Further enquiries will be made when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic 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

7. Staff training

All staff in the School receive regular training to raise awareness of abuse, and to improve their knowledge of the child protection procedures that have been agreed locally. The maximum period of time before refresher training must take place is three years.

8. School Procedure for Referrals

- When a member of staff suspects significant harm, they should not try to investigate but inform the Headteacher immediately. The parents are not always contacted at this time.
- The Headteacher will contact Social Services, who will advise about action to be taken.
- The decision to inform parents will be taken by Social Services on consultation with the School.
- If a child is interviewed by Social Services/Police on the premises and a parent is not present, a member of staff must be present.
- The agencies should keep the School informed of subsequent action.
- If a child protection referral is made, a multi agency case conference will be held. The case conference offers the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action. The named person is expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings.
- If a child is placed on the register, the class teacher and relevant staff will be informed of all necessary information.

9. Physical Restraint

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

10. Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

11. Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

12. Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, and is reviewed annually. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

13. E-Safety

Our e-safety policy, set out in a separate document, and is reviewed annually. It reflects the consideration we give to protect our child from issues such as cyber bullying.

14. GOVERNING BODY SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) RESPONSIBILITIES.

The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Government guidance "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" which states that the Governing Body should ensure the school:

- has a child protection policy and procedures in place
- operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- has a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues
- the Governing Body remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements
- a member of the Governing Body is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the head teacher
- the Governing Body reviews its policies and procedures annually and provides information to the Local Authority about them

SAFER RECRUITMENT- PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

All should be done to ensure that all those working with our children are suitable people. This involves scrutinising applicants, verifying their identity and obtaining references, as well as mandatory List 99 and CRB checks. The Office Manager keeps an up to date single record of staff qualifications, identity and CRB checks.

1.The School Will:

- operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to Circular DfES/0278/2002 Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young People in the Education Service.
- consult with the designated Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Safeguarding in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures in accordance with Government guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006).
- ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full in accordance with Government guidance "Safeguarding Children in Education: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff" DfES/2044/2005.
- ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents.
- ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of position of trust).

2. Allegations against staff

If an allegation is made against any member of staff; it will always be investigated by the Headteacher. In the case of an allegation being made against the Headteacher; it will be investigated by the chair of the Governors.

If it is felt, after these initial investigations, that a further enquiry is needed, then the member of staff will be suspended. Suspension is a neutral act and in no way implies that the person is guilty of any wrongdoing. However it is acknowledged that this would be distressing for the person concerned, and that the School will do all it can to balance the interests of any individual with that of the need to keep children safe. The school will seek advice from the LA on these matters and comply with national and agreed guidance.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School staff and governors as applicable.

Child Protection Policy: Sept 2009
Reviewed: Sept 2010