



St Clement and St James
CE Primary School

Safeguarding and
Child Protection Policy
2018

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Our vision

St Clement and St James is a school with Christian values at its heart. We are proud of its history and our strong links with the vibrant community to which we belong. We welcome and celebrate every child, helping all children to develop their character and full academic potential. We promote high aspirations and a love of learning through a rich and varied curriculum.

Our school values are compassion, creativity, excellence, friendship, forgiveness and thankfulness. These values help us show and grow love, faith and hope, which are at the heart of the school and are defined by 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

Introduction

All schools are required to have a Child Protection Policy that guides the procedures and practices of staff when safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. St Clement and St James CE Primary School takes very seriously its duty towards all the pupils who have been entrusted to its care, and seeks to provide a school environment where all children are safe, secure, valued, respected, and listened to.

St Clement and St James understands that our work in safeguarding and protecting children must always have regard for the national guidance issued by the Secretary of State and should be in line with local guidance and procedures.

We understand the term safeguarding to mean that we will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised. We also understand that where we have any concerns about a child's welfare we will take all appropriate action to address those concerns by working in full partnership with other agencies.

A range of other school policies are central to many aspects of the school's Child Protection Policy, and this document should therefore be read in conjunction with our policies for:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Online safety
- Health and Safety
- Exclusions

Our Child Protection policy is written with due regard to the national guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (latest version published by the Department for Children Schools and Families in September 2016) and "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (March 2015) and will be reviewed each time any subsequent guidance is issued by the Secretary of State.

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will always be compliant with the London Child Protection Procedures produced by the London Safeguarding Children Board. Those procedures which have been adopted by the Tri Borough Local

Safeguarding Children Board and are available from
<http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>

Our procedures will be followed by all adults, including volunteers, working with or on behalf of the school.

Our policy is reviewed annually by the Governors of our school and the Headteacher (the Designated Safeguarding Lead).

This policy is available to all parents either in hard copy or from our website.

1. ST CLEMENT AND ST JAMES CE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

St Clement and St James CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our pupils. The Governors expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how each individual adult working on behalf of the school has an active part to play in protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare.

- 1.1 All members of staff must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all pupils. They must know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise.
- 1.2 To this end the school will ensure that all staff, whether permanent or temporary, and volunteers know who is the member of the senior leadership team who has designated overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding, and what this role means. This is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- 1.3 At St Clement and St James, that person is the Headteacher, who has received training in order to undertake the role.
- 1.4 In the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher is the DSL. If neither of these members of staff are available then any concern should be reported to another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 1.5 All members of staff will receive training on St Clement and St James child protection responsibilities and procedures during their induction period, and regularly thereafter at least annually in order that they are equipped with the skills needed to keep children safe, with regular updates as necessary. All Newly Qualified Teachers receive an Induction Session as part of their NQT Training Programme. The DSL has updated training every two years and keeps up to date with safeguarding developments at least annually.

All school staff should identify children who would benefit from “early help” and liaise with the DSL regarding this.
- 1.6 In annual update training at the start of the academic year, all members of staff are issued with the latest DfE guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2016). Staff are required to sign that they have read and understood Part 1 of this document. This document is saved electronically in the staff share area of the school’s network (folder: child protection).
- 1.7 The DSL maintains the child protection register and records. Teachers are informed of all matters relating to pupils in their classes.
- 1.8 Where there is the need to monitor a pupil more closely the child will

be placed on the school's cause for concern register.

- 1.9 Supervision is made available to those staff that are involved in the management of allegations of child abuse.
- 1.10 The DSL will ensure there is feedback to Governors on safeguarding issues. The Designated Governors are Nina Jumah and Carrie Musson
- 1.11 The school will always follow safe recruitment procedures so that we can be confident that all adults working in our school are safe to do so. The school always ensures that agencies provide checks for agency workers (for example supply teachers). The administration staff check that agency workers presenting at the school are the same person for whom the agency has provided vetting information.
- 1.12 All governors have an Enhanced DBS check.

2. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential and the purpose of all intervention is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. For those staff who engage with pupils who experience discrimination in their daily lives, or who are from cultures different to those of the professionals, assumption and stereotyping must not be part of our practice. Every effort must be made to ensure that cultural issues are understood and that each individual case is dealt with on its own merits.

Teachers and those working in school have day-to-day contact with pupils in their classes and around the school buildings, and have knowledge of child development and behavioural norms. This places these professionals in a unique position to identify and help abused children. However, **teachers do not decide if something is or is not a child protection issue.** It is the duty of school staff to pass concerns on to the relevant authority.

All persons who have any contact with pupils at the school have a full DBS check prior to working at the school.

The school will ensure that it follows the guidance on Safer Recruitment of Staff.

3. KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

3.1 Child Protection - responding to concerns about individual children

3.1.1 All children at St Clement and St James must be able to place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the school. They must feel sure that they can speak about any worries or concerns they may have and that they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately. All staff must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to talk to them about any matter which raises child protection concerns.

3.1.2 All staff must:

- Listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions.
- Respect the child's right to privacy but not promise confidentiality
- Reassure the child that h/she has done the right thing in telling.
- Explain to the child that in order to keep him/her safe from harm the information that has been shared must be passed on.
- Report what has been disclosed to the Designated Person in the school as soon as possible.
- Record, as soon as is practicable, what was said using the child's actual words.
- Sign and date the record.

3.1.3 The DSL will:

- Assess any urgent medical needs of the child.
- Consider whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm.
- Check whether the child is currently subject to a Child Protection Plan or has been previously subject to a Plan.
- Confirm whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff.
- The DSL should only inform the parents/carers of the child of any concerns once the Triborough Safeguarding and Child Protection Schools and Education Officer, or Social Services Duty Team leader, has been consulted and their advice sought.
- Consider whether the matter should be discussed with the child's parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm because of delay or the parent's possible actions or reactions.
- Seek advice if unsure that a child protection referral should be made.
- If the child discloses sexual abuse or if sexual abuse is suspected, the child must not be questioned and the parents must not be informed until Social Services and the Police Child Abuse Investigation team has been informed and advice given.
- Information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis and must be treated in absolute confidence. Staff must not discuss the allegation with the child, family members or colleagues.

3.1.4 The DSL will either make a referral to the child's local authority children's services duty team or referral and assessment team or, if a referral is not considered appropriate at that stage, make full written records of the

information that they have received, detailing the reasons for the judgement that the matter was not referred to the local authority.

3.1.5 The DSL must keep a written record of all contact with other agencies.

3.1.6 All paperwork relating to child abuse must be kept in a locked cabinet. All pupils who are subject to a Child Protection Plan will have Core Group meetings and Case Conferences organised by Social Services. The DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will attend these on behalf of the school. Pupils are aware that these meetings take place and that the school will be presenting a report at the meetings. The DSL, class teacher and school nurse monitor pupils who are subject to a Child Protection Plan.

3.1.7 The DSL and class teacher also monitor pupils who are on the cause for concern register.

3.2 Child Protection – recognition of and response to abuse

3.2.1 Owing to the nature of the day-to-day relationship children have with staff, all adults working in the school are particularly well placed to notice any physical, emotional or behavioural signs that a child may be suffering significant harm. We understand that harm means the ill-treatment or impairment of a child's health and/or development, including that caused as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person.

3.2.2 All staff must therefore be alert to any possible indicators that a child is suffering harm and report any concerns to the DSL for child protection. Staff are aware that there may be additional barriers when recognising the abuse of pupils with Special Educational Needs or a disability.

3.2.3 All adults working in the school will receive annual child protection training in order that their awareness to the possibility of a child suffering remains high.

3.2.4 For definitions of child abuse see Appendix 2.

3.3 Safeguarding – Providing a Safe Environment

3.3.1 All parents and carers of pupils attending St Clement and St James must feel secure in the knowledge that they are entrusting their children to adults who will strive to keep them safe at school. We do this by:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school
- Ensuring that our staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection, according to their role and responsibilities, and keep a record of all training undertaken
- Encouraging the self-esteem and self-assertiveness of all pupils through the curriculum so that the children themselves become aware of danger and risk, and of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not
- Working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children

- Displaying appropriate posters that detail contact numbers for child protection help-lines
- Always following Safer Recruitment procedures when appointing staff or volunteers to work in our school
- Welcoming visitors in a safe and secure manner
- Undertaking risk assessments when planning out of school activities or trips
- Ensuring that any community groups which use our premises for the provision of services to children have child protection knowledge and understanding evidenced by a policy, or are prepared to adopt our own policy.

3.4 Safeguarding & Child Protection in specific circumstances

3.4.1 Attendance

We are aware that a pupil's unexplained absence from school could mean that they are at risk from harm.

- We will always report an unexplained absence of a child with a Child Protection Plan to the child's social worker within one day.
- We will always seek to clarify the reason for a child's absence from school with the child's parent or carer as soon as is practicable on the first day.
- We will always report a continued absence about which we have not been notified by the parent or carer to the Education Welfare Service. We will always report to the local authority the name of any child who has been newly registered to attend our school but does not arrive on the expected day.
- We will always report to the Education Welfare Service ACE team (Attendance, Child employment and entertainment, Elective home education and children missing education) the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to school on the expected return date; a child who has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education; has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered; has been permanently excluded; or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

3.4.2 Pupil behaviour

We aim to maintain a safe and calm environment by expecting good behaviour from our pupils in line with our behaviour policy.

We are aware that any physical response from a member of staff to a pupil's poor behaviour could lead to a child protection concern being raised by the child or parent/carer.

- No member of staff will use force when dealing with a pupil's breach of our behaviour policy, unless the potential consequences of not physically intervening are sufficiently serious to justify such action.
- We will always record any occasion when physical intervention has been necessary.
- We will always notify parents or carers of any such incident.

3.4.3 Bullying

We understand that bullying is harmful to children. We have an Anti-bullying Policy that sets out our aim of ensuring no child becomes a victim of bullying, and the work that we carry out in school to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is known to be unacceptable. We take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

We understand that bullying may take different forms and may include racist or homophobic behaviour. Any such reported or observed incident will be dealt with in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

3.4.4 Online Safety

We recognise that children's use of the internet is an important part of their education, but that there are risks of harm associated with its use. We have an online safety policy that addresses how we minimise those risks in school and teach children how to stay safe when using the internet in their lives out of school.

We also recognise that all members of staff and volunteer staff must always be mindful of the need to follow our policy of acceptable use of our IT equipment.

The governing body should ensure appropriate filtering systems and monitoring of internet use, particularly by vulnerable pupils, are in place.

The governing body should also ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

3.4.5 Health and Safety

We have a Health and Safety Policy which demonstrates the consideration we give to minimising any risk to the children when on the school premises and when undertaking activities out of school under the supervision of our staff.

3.4.6 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

If a member of staff discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 this must be reported to the DSL immediately. There is a legal duty on teachers to personally report this to the police by calling 101. The Home Office document *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – reporting procedures* is referred to. This is saved electronically in the staff share area of the network (folder: child protection). The DSL must always be informed. The DSL will liaise with Children's Services.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of FGM, or that FGM has been carried out but there is no disclosure or visual evidence, this must be reported to the DSL who will liaise with Children's Services and follow local safeguarding advice.

3.4.7 Preventing Radicalisation

Members of staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection from the risk of radicalisation. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL who will liaise with families and with other professionals as appropriate. The DSL, in conjunction with senior leadership, carries out a risk assessment at regular intervals, and staff and governors take part in Prevent training regularly to maintain an awareness of factors which may make a child vulnerable to radicalisation.

The school's vision and values are a protective factor. Day to day learning gives frequent opportunities to support positive messaging and promote understanding of other religions and cultures. Through our Christian ethos we promote a respect and love for all groups of peoples, including those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith. We teach children to value democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. The school views this as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Any extremist views, given by a child or a parent, will always be challenged.

The school's filtering ensures that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material with accessing the internet in school.

4. Working together with parents and carers

4.1 Pupil information

We recognise the importance of keeping up-to-date and accurate information about pupils. We regularly ask all parents/carers to provide us with the following information and to notify us of any changes that occur.

- names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility
- emergency contact details
- details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (eg Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- name and contact detail of GP
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child.

4.2 Confidentiality

Information about pupils given to us by the children themselves, their parents or carers, or by other agencies will remain confidential. Members of staff are given relevant information only on a “need to know” basis in order to support the child.

We are, however, under a duty to share any information which is of a child protection nature. We understand that this is in the best interests of the child and overrides any other duties we have regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

We have a duty to keep any records which relate to child protection work undertaken by us or our partner agencies, and to ensure that these are kept apart from the main pupil record, stored securely and only accessible to key members of staff. We also have a duty to send copies of these records to any school to which the pupil transfers. In such cases duplicate records are retained and kept securely for ten years.

4.3 Referrals to partner agencies

If we have a reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child we will usually seek to discuss this with the child’s parents or carers in the first instance. On occasion, according to the nature of our concern, it may be necessary for us to make an immediate referral to Family and Children’s Services when to do otherwise may put the child at risk of further harm either because of delay, or because of the actions of the parents or carers.

4.4 Sharing our policy

This policy is available to all parents and parents of prospective pupils.

5. **ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

5.1 **Safer Recruitment**

5.1.1 All staff and volunteers working with children in our school will be recruited safely:

Preparation

We always consider the vacancy that has arisen within the context of safeguarding children and ensure that we include the responsibility to safeguard children within the requirements of the role.

We always consider carefully the knowledge skills and experience required to safeguard children and include these within a person specification.

Advertising

We always advertise our vacancies in a manner that is likely to attract a wide range of applicants.

The advertisement always includes a statement about our commitment to safeguarding children and our expectation that all applicants will share that commitment.

The advertisement will state that the post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

Applications

We ensure that our application form enables us to gather information about the candidates' suitability to work with children by asking specific and direct questions.

We scrutinise all completed application forms.

We do not accept CVs.

References

We do not accept open references or testimonials.

We ask for the names of at least two referees.

We take up references prior to interview and ask specific questions about the candidate's previous employment or experience of working with children.

We follow up any vague or ambiguous statements.

We verify previous employment history.

Appropriate checks are applied to staff and volunteers who come to work at St Clement and St James.

For statutory disclosure checks we ensure sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure.

Appropriate Risk Assessments are carried as per the CIPD guidance.

Interviews

We always conduct a face to face interview even when there is only one candidate.

Our interview panel always contains at least one member trained in safer recruitment practice.

Our interview questions seek to ensure we understand the candidate's values and beliefs that relate to children.

All candidates are asked to bring original documents which confirm their identity, qualifications, and right to work.

Appointments

Our offer of appointment is conditional on all requested checks having been returned as satisfactory.

We will refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority any person whose checks reveal that they have sought work when barred from working with children.

Induction

We provide newly appointed staff with appropriate guidance about safe working practice, boundaries and propriety and explain the consequences of not following the guidance.

Continuing Professional Development

We ensure that all staff receive regular training in Child Protection.

Supervision

We supervise staff and act on any concerns that relate to the safeguarding of children.

Allegations

We follow our locally agreed procedures for the management of allegations against staff.

Dismissal

We refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority any member of staff who is dismissed because of misconduct relating to a child.

5.2 Safe practice

5.2.1 We understand that all adults working in or on behalf of our school have a duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare. We aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for our children through the relationship we have with them and their all adults working in our school behave in a manner that fosters this parents or carers and will always seek to ensure that relationship.

5.2.2 We ensure that all members of staff are clear about the expectations we have of their behaviour towards all children and that any incident that falls below our expected standards will be dealt with appropriately.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY AND PRACTICE

6.1 The DSL continually monitors our child protection and safeguarding practices and brings to the notice of the governors any weaknesses or deficiencies.

6.2 The Governing Body has a duty to remedy any weaknesses that are identified.

6.3 An annual report is submitted to the Governing Body which outlines the child protection and safeguarding work we have undertaken during the year. Names of children are not shared. Included in the report are details of:

- The names of members of staff with designated child protection responsibilities
- Confirmation that all new staff and volunteers have been recruited safely and that a record of all staff vetting checks is up-to-date and complete
- The training that has been undertaken by the designated staff
- The training that has been undertaken by all other staff and volunteers(working with children).
- Details of any incidents when physical restraint of pupils has been used
- Details of information and guidance that has been given to staff
- Details of safeguarding and child protection issues included explicitly in the curriculum
- Confirmation that all child protection records are stored securely and where appropriate have been transferred to another school
- Details of safeguarding and child protection information given to parents
- Details of the safety of the school site and the access given to visitors
- Confirmation that all school lettings have been agreed with consideration given to the safeguarding of children
- Numbers of child protection referrals made to Children’s Services
- Details of child protection conferences or meetings attended regarding children (names of children are not shared)
- Numbers of children who are, or have been, subject to a Child Protection Plan.

6.4 The Governors and Headteacher will work together on any aspect of Safeguarding and Child Protection that is identified as an area for development over the coming year.

6.5 Our policy is reviewed annually with governors.

7. USEFUL CONTACTS

Safeguarding and child protection training, consultation and advice:
 Hilary Shaw – Triborough Safeguarding and Child Protection Schools and Education Officer (020 7598 4876)

Consultation and referrals:
 RBKC – 020 7361 3013
 LBHF – 020 8753 5392

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – for referral and management of allegations against staff:
 Kembra Healy (020 8753 5125, kembra.healy@lbhf.gov.uk)

NSPCC 0800 028 0285 (whistleblowing helpline)

Childline 0800 1111 (pupils)
www.educateagainsthate.com

Department for Education website to equip teachers and parents with information, tools and resources to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people.

Prevent Schools and Colleges Officer – Jake Butterworth 020 8753 5843|
jake.butterworth@lbhf.gov.uk

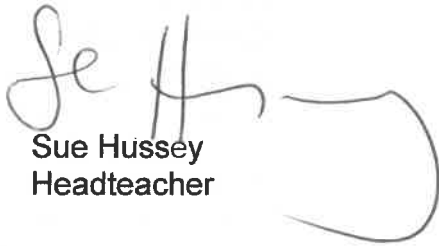
Adopted by Governing Body: 7.2.18

Review date: February 2019

Signed:



Sean Doherty
Chair of Governors



Sue Hussey
Headteacher

Appendix 1

CHILD PROTECTION – TRIBOROUGH GUIDELINES FOR SAFE PRACTICE

Below is a set of guidelines that staff should take on board when dealing with individual/small groups of pupils. It is important to be mindful at all times of your behaviour in relationship to individual/small groups of pupils and of the potential risk of an allegation. Staff should take necessary precautions in order to minimise the opportunity for an allegation to be made against them.

- Whenever possible try not to be alone in a room with a pupil, regardless of gender. If you are on your own with a pupil, leave the door open and inform a colleague if possible. Always keep an appropriate distance between you and the pupil. Avoid being alone with a pupil in transport.
- Do not engage in conversations about your personal life with pupils.
- Keep boundaries very clear between you and pupils, particularly if the conversation involves relationships, emotions, and sexual content.
- Gifts to individual children should be part of an agreed reward system; other gifts should be of insignificant value and given equally. Do not single a child out for special treatment. Do not accept gifts regularly or ones of significant value; declare any which may be misconstrued.
- Maintain professional boundaries. Do not give out your address, home/ mobile phone number or email address to pupils unless agreed with senior management and parents. Do not send pupils text messages and follow internal guidance about internet/email use. If possible do not have your mobile phone out when dealing with an individual pupil. Do not socialise with pupils or take them to your home.
- Do not accept students as 'friends' on Facebook or other social networking sites.
- If a pupil wishes to disclose personal information to you, ensure that they understand that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. Do not probe a pupil about their personal life unless they approach you..
- Be aware of pupils forming attachments to you as a teacher. Report any concerns that a pupil has developed a crush on a member of staff. If a child touches you inappropriately, record and report it to the designated person. It may be innocent, but could indicate a problem that needs to be explored. Avoid clothing which could give the wrong messages.
- Be aware of conversations that you have with pupils and the need to avoid sexual innuendo at all times. Older pupils are particularly conscious of staff making a comment from which a sexual inference could be drawn and this can place you in a very vulnerable position.
- Physical contact should be needs-led, age and gender appropriate. Involve another member of staff where contact may be misinterpreted. Avoid conduct which could be misinterpreted, eg horseplay, tickling or fun fights. Avoid children sitting on your lap.
- Where physical contact is necessary to demonstrate the use of an instrument or equipment, eg PE or music tuition, ensure that this is within appropriate boundaries.
- Do not do anything personal for a child that they can do for themselves. If cleaning or changing a child with special needs, try to have another person present. Follow the agreed care plan for children requiring intimate care on a

regular basis. Supervising children showering (on residential trips) or changing should be age and gender appropriate and sensitive to potential embarrassment.

- Record and report incidents involving a child, including injuries, according to the relevant procedures eg child protection, health and safety, physical intervention.
- Do not make, or encourage others to make, comments which are sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive, or humiliating, or might be interpreted as such.
- Adhere to the school's policy on sex and relationships education and the wishes of parents. Ensure materials used relate to planned learning outcomes and cannot be misinterpreted.
- Only use photography and filming as appropriate to a school lesson or activity and ensure a senior member of staff is aware. Avoid one to one sessions. Be clear about the use and disposal of images. Be sensitive to children who appear uncomfortable being photographed. Recognise potential for misinterpretation. Ensure all images are available for scrutiny. Do not take, display or distribute images without consent.

If at any time you are concerned about a situation and wish to seek advice, you should speak to the DSL (headteacher) or, in her absence, the Deputy Headteacher. Report any concerns about a colleague's behaviour and/or attitude toward children to the Headteacher.

Appendix 2

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Criteria for registration and categories of abuse

All children have certain basic needs, which include:

- Physical care and protection
- Affection and approval
- Stimulation and approval
- Discipline and control that is consistent and appropriate to age
- The opportunity to gradually acquire self-esteem, confidence, independence and responsibility that are age appropriate.

Individual cases must always be treated on their own merits. However in general terms, the following definition should provide the bases for action under these guidelines:-

“A child is considered to be in need of protection when the basic needs of that child are not being met through avoidable acts of either commission or omission.”

Before a child is placed on a Child Protection Plan a conference must decide that there is, or is a likelihood of, significant harm leading to the need for a Child Protection Plan.

The following are used for the plan. They are intended to provide definitions as a guide; in some instances more than one category of registration may be appropriate.

Neglect: the persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out an important aspect of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical Abuse: physical injury to a child, including deliberately 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 they do not truly comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Emotional Abuse: actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All forms of abuse involve some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used only where it is the sole form of abuse.

NEGLECT

Severe neglect is associated with major retardation of cognitive functioning as well as growth. It is recognised through a typical pattern of poor growth, poor hygiene, withdrawal and in extreme cases a pseudo-autistic state, all of which can rapidly reverse in alternative care.

Although neglect has one of the most pervasive effects on development and is one of the most frequent forms of abuse, it is an area which is frequently neglected by professionals. Like parents, professionals can feel overwhelmed and hopeless by large families living in squalid conditions.

Signs to look out for:

- dirty unkempt appearance of child, in overall poor condition
- thin, wispy hair. Underweight child, diarrhoea may indicate poor nutrition
- an undernourished child may be unduly solemn or unresponsive, or may be overeager to obtain food
- an under-stimulated child may not reach expected milestones
- behaviour and developmental difficulties that cannot be explained by clinical factors

Associated factors

Neglected children frequently come from homes where there is:

- a parent who is lonely, isolated, unsupported or depressed
- poor inter-parental relationship/domestic violence
- a parent who is abusing drugs or alcohol
- a large number of children living in cramped or very poor conditions

Action to be taken

If a teacher has concerns about the well-being of a child in his/her class, a discussion should take place with the Designated Teacher, records should be kept, and when appropriate Social Services staff are informed by the Designated Teacher.

PHYSICAL ABUSE (non-accidental injury)

Location of injury

It should not be assumed that an injury to a part of the body normally vulnerable to accidental injury has necessarily been caused accidentally – it could be non-accidental. All injuries to children, which do not easily come into the category of normal bumps and scrapes, should be seen by a doctor.

Certain parts of the body are more commonly subjected to non-accidental injury. These include the upper arm, where a child may be gripped or shaken, the back, and the buttocks. Multiple injuries of various types, ages and location are common features of physical abuse.

Most non-accidental injuries leave marks on the body. PE teachers and swimming instructors are therefore key people in the identification of this form of abuse, as they regularly see the children partially dressed.

Signs to look out for:

- children who show a reluctance to undress or to expose parts of their bodies should be monitored as children who may have suffered physical injury
- unexplained absences
- physical signs of injury
- unexplained or confused accounts of how an injury occurred
- explanation of an injury which appears to be inappropriate to the nature and age of the injury.

Common medical/physical factors associated with physical abuse

a) Bruising

- facial bruising around the mouth and ears
- groups of small bruises
- black eyes without a forehead injury, particularly if both eyes are affected
- weal marks or outline of bruising (e.g. hand mark)
- bruising of soft tissue with no obvious explanation (most bruises occur on bony protuberances such as the temple or shin)
- bruises on the back, back of legs, stomach, chest or neck
- bruises or cuts to mouth or tongue (e.g. split frenulum)
- pinch marks are found in pairs and may be seen on the back, buttocks, arms or cheeks

b) Bites

- bites leave clear impressions of teeth and some bruising
- parents sometimes claim that bites have been made by other children or animals. It is therefore important to check the size and shape of the injury. If the impression is more than 3cms across it will have been caused by an adult or adolescent
- bites can be inflicted almost anywhere on the body
- bites are never accidental

c) Burns and scalds

- children will sometimes suffer minor burns through hot irons etc, but it is uncommon for multiple burns to be caused accidentally
- a cigarette burn is characteristically round, but may have a tail when dragged against the skin, and is surrounded by an area of inflamed skin
- cigarette burns can be found in groups and can be found on any part of the body
- scalds from boiling water may result from lack of supervision, or non-accidentally
- a child is very unlikely to sit down willingly in very hot water; therefore he cannot scald a bottom accidentally without also scalding the feet
- burns and/or scalds are particularly worrying as a degree of sadism may be involved when such injuries are inflicted

Associated Factors

- injuries not consistent with explanation given by parent (even if agreed by the child)
- circumstances where parent delays seeking medical advice
- a history of repeated injuries or presentation to the Accident & Emergency Department
- consent for a medical refused by parent
- desire of a parent to attribute blame elsewhere
- distant or mechanical handling of the child by the parent

Action to be taken

If a teacher has concerns that a pupil in her/his class may be suffering from physical abuse, the DSL should be informed, and detailed records kept (including dates of injuries noted). The DSL will decide if concerns should be shared with parents, and when appropriate, Social Services staff and a designated doctor should be informed.

SEXUAL ABUSE

The traumatic effects of child sexual abuse can be far-reaching and enduring, impacting on a child's cognitive, behavioural and social development. The earlier the abuse occurs, the more adversely subsequent stages of development may be affected. The longer the abuse continues, the more extensive it is eg involving penetrative abuse. The greater the number of developmental stages that abuse continues through, the more disturbed the child is likely to be. Children who have suffered chronic long-term sexual abuse tend to have very negative feelings about themselves and all aspects of their relationships.

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse can be one or more of the following:

- rape – genital and/or oral intercourse
- digital penetration or penetration with an object
- mutual masturbation
- inappropriate fondling
- taking pornographic photographs or exposing the child to pornographic materials
- forcing the child to observe others involved in sexual activities
- sadomasochistic activities

Both boys and girls can suffer from sexual abuse. Both men and women can be perpetrators – boys and girls who disclose sexual abuse from a female perpetrator are often met with disbelief. It is therefore important to listen to what a child says without being judgemental. Abusers can be parents, friends, teachers, child-care workers, clergymen or strangers. Warning children about *Stranger Danger* should only form part of the child protection programme.

Signs to look out for:

- a child who demonstrates inappropriate sexual interest and activity, through play or drawings
- sexualised behaviour, masturbation and sex play which often leaves the peer group confused or embarrassed
- a child having excessive preoccupation with, or precocious knowledge of adult sexual behaviours
- a child who shows a marked fear of adults, usually men, but occasionally men and women
- a child who presents as depressed and where there may be instances of drug or alcohol abuse, suicide attempts or running away
- a child who suddenly starts to wet or soil
- a child who takes over the role of wife/mother within the family
- a child whose concentration and academic performance suddenly deteriorates
- a child who avoids medical examination or is reluctant to change for PE
- a child who has low self-esteem and few friends
- aggressive behaviour from a normally quiet child, or withdrawn behaviour from a normally boisterous child
- frequent unexplained absences or lateness
- a child who talks of nightmares and being unable to sleep; a child who may be excessively tired
- fire raising
- pregnancy in young teenagers where the identity of the father is vague or unknown
- recurrent urinary tract infections
- signs of sexually transmitted infections and overall dishevelled appearance

Action to be taken

If any teacher has concerns that a child in her/his class may be suffering from sexual abuse in any form, they must discuss this with the ~~Designated Teacher~~ **DSL**, who should then discuss it with Social Services personnel. Parents should not be informed at the early stage of what action has been taken, as this may serve to quieten the child, putting her/him at even greater risk. Detailed records should be kept, including dates and circumstances surrounding discussions.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional or psychological abuse can be defined as the destruction of the child's competence to be able to function in a social situation. The child may be denied appropriate contact with peers within or outside of school, and be forced to take on a particular role in relation to parents, which is detrimental to the child's ability to function appropriately in social contexts. This type of abuse is very difficult to identify as there are no physical signs – symptoms are usually apparent via a child's behaviour and demeanour.

It is important to note that the emotional/psychological abuse is present in all other forms of abuse, but this category is only used when it is the sole form of abuse.

Signs to look out for:

- a child may be inducted into a parental care-taking role and not be encouraged to be involved with appropriate play
- a child may be used as a parent's confidant to a degree that is harmful to the child's psychological development
- a child may be ignored, rejected or denigrated by a parent
- a child may be terrorised by a parent or others so that she/he is overly fearful and watchful
- a parent who is unable to be responsive to a child's emotional needs, who may be emotionally distant and/or excessively negative and hostile
- a child (usually of a mentally ill or disturbed parent) who is inducted into a parent's delusionary state or paranoid beliefs
- a child who is cripplingly over-protected and not given freedom to act at an age appropriate level
- a parent who provides only conditional love with threats of withdrawal of love

Behavioural definitions are very difficult to quantify because a) most children experience some of these acts from time to time, and b) because the impact of a single or seldom occurring act of abuse will not have severe and harmful effects. The harm of emotional maltreatment results from the cumulative effects of repeated acts of psychological abuse.

Associated Factors

Children who suffer from emotional abuse frequently come from homes where there is:

- a mentally ill or disturbed parent
- drug or alcohol abuse
- a parent who is socially isolated, unsupported or depressed, or conversely, a parent who has a very active social life with very little time or energy to give to child care
- a parent who has poor social skills, who may have learning difficulties and lack of knowledge about children's age appropriate needs
- a parent who has suffered severe abuse within her/his own childhood
- a household where there is 'adult on adult' domestic violence

Many parents who emotionally abuse their children are unaware that what they are doing is harmful. Because of their own life experiences they may have a distorted view of parenting and their role as a mother/father.

Action to be taken

If a teacher is concerned that a pupil in her/his class is being emotionally maltreated, it should be reported to the DSL, detailed records should be kept, and when appropriate, Social Services staff informed by the DSL.