

THE PREBENDAL SCHOOL –CHICHESTER

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989, the Education Act 2002 and in line with government publications:

- “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2006,
- “Framework for the Assessment of Children in need and their Families” 2000,
- “What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused” 2003,
- DfES guidance “*Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruiting in Education*” and the
- Sussex Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures (Produced by West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Local Safeguarding Children Boards).

1.2 The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibilities under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the school to identify assess and support those children who are suffering harm.

1.3 We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern.

1.4 All staff believe that the school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

1.5 The aims of the policy are:

- To support the child’s development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and to ensure that the school contributes to an assessment of needs and support packages for those children.

- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

2 PROCEDURES

2.1 The Prebendal School Procedures are in line with the West Sussex LSCB Procedures. We will ensure that:

- All members of the Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities. (See section 14 of this policy)
- We have a nominated designated member of staff.
- The designated member of staff has undertaken the initial *Designated Member of Staff* training and subsequent refresher courses every two years delivered through the West Sussex County Council Safeguarding Unit.
- The Head Master will act in the absence of the designated member of staff.
- All members of staff are provided with Child Protection Training every three years.
- All members of staff, volunteers, and the CP governors know:
 - The signs and symptoms of concern
 - How to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
 - What to do if they are concerned about a child
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication in the parents' handbook.
- Selection and recruitment of staff meet the requirements as set out in the Safer Recruitment guidance and that there is at least one member of each interview panel that has completed the safer recruitment course.

2.2 The school's Child Protection procedures will be regularly reviewed and up dated. On discovery of any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements, they will be remedied without delay.

2.3 The Designated members of staff with status and authority to take responsibility for child protection matters are: Mr. D. Nason for the West Street Site and Mrs. M Shingler for the Early Years and the North Street Site

2.4 The names of the designated member of staff for Child Protection are also clearly advertised in the Child Protection Handbook together with explanations and details of the school's procedures.

2.5 All members of staff will be given copies of the child protection policy.

2.6 Contact details for outside agencies:

- Children's Safeguarding Unit. Durban House, South Bersted Business Park, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. PO22 9RE – Local Authority Designated Officer – Rosemary Terry - 01243 642410 – Assistant:
- Diocese of Chichester Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Adults. Church House. 211, New Church Road, Hove, East Sussex. BN3 4ED – Maureen Hunt – 01273 425680 email maureen.hunt@diochi.org.uk
- Sussex Police Safeguarding Children Unit – 0845 60 70 999.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Designated Member of Staff is responsible for:

- Referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse to the Social Care Assessment Team and acting as a focal point for staff or other concerns about the child
- Ensuring that written records are kept of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from ordinary pupil records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on the usual pupil records.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Attending Child Protection Conferences, core groups other multi-agency planning meetings and preparing assessments and reports.
- Ensuring that any pupil that is subject to a child protection plan who is absent without explanation is referred to their Social Care Team
- Organising child protection training for all school personnel.
- Reviewing annually the Child Protection plan and the Child Protection Handbook
- Reporting to the Governors' Pastoral Care Committee updated information about policy & procedures, incidents and cases, training and any children subject to a child protection plan. (Anonymised).

4 SUPPORTING CHILDREN

- 4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves and find it difficult to maintain a sense of self worth.
- 4.2 We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 4.3 We accept that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 4.4 Staff at Prebendal will support all pupils by:
 - Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
 - Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
 - Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
 - Notifying the Assessment Team as soon as there is significant concern.
 - Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school as a matter of priority.

5 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential
- 5.2 The Head Teacher or Designated Member of Staff will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well being.
- 5.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Services with their parents\carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, the Duty Manager of the Assessment Team will be consulted.

6 SUPPORTING STAFF

- 6.1 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Member of Staff and to seek further support as appropriate.

7 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

- 7.1 All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with children to be conducted in view of other adults.
- 7.2 All staff should be aware of West Sussex Guidance on Behaviour Issues (copy in the staff room) and Prebendal's own Behaviour Management policy.
- 7.3 We are aware that pupils may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Head Master or in his absence the Designated Member of Staff. (If both are absent any member of the SMT should be informed.)
- 7.4 The Head Master on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- 7.5 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Head Master, the allegation must be passed on to the Designated member of Staff who will immediately inform the Chair of the Governors. The Chair of Governors will then proceed as in 7.4 above without informing the Head Master.
- 7.6 Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Head Master, against whom the allegation has been made, needs careful consideration. The Head Master will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer, the Chair of Governors and members of the SMT.
- 7.7 In the event of an allegation against the Head Master, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of the Governors with advice as in 7.6 above.
- 7.8 The school will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. Ofsted will be informed (via

ISI Office) as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days.

7.9 In the event of an allegation being made against a resident member of staff, the school will provide alternative accommodation away from the children whilst the member of staff is suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature.

7.10 The school has a requirement to report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. (The ISA commenced operations on the 20th January 2009 and its address for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (telephone 0300 123 1111))

8 WHISTLE BLOWING

8.1 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection in the school or about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

8.2 There is a separate 'Whistle blowing Policy' which staff should be familiar with.

9 PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

9.1 The policy of physical intervention by staff is set out separately, and acknowledges that they must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering himself/herself or others. At all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

9.2 Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness if possible.

9.3 The school will arrange training in the Team Teach technique

9.4 It must be understood that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

10 BULLYING

10.1 The 'Anti-bullying Policy' is set out as a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes homophobic and gender related bullying.

11 RACIST INCIDENTS

11.1 The school acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

12 PREVENTION

12.1 It is recognised that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

12.2 The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know that there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

13 HEALTH & SAFETY

13.1 The Prebendal 'Health & Safety' policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children within the school environment, in relation to internet use and when away from the school premises undertaking trips and visits.

14 RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNORS

14.1. Best practice requires governing bodies of independent schools to ensure that:

- A Child Protection Policy and procedures are in place, and are in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and that the Policy is made available to parents on request.
- The Policy and procedures are reviewed at regular intervals.
- Safe Recruitment procedures are operated and all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, and that these procedures comply with locally

agreed inter-agency routines and DfES requirements. Arrangements should include procedures for the governing body to liaise with other agencies in the event that allegations are made involving the Head Master, noting that any allegations at that level should be dealt with by the Chairman of Governors.

- A member of the school's management team is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Child Protection issues and liaising with other agencies where necessary. He/she will be known as the Designated Member of Staff. This need not necessarily be a teacher but he/she must have the status and authority to carry out the role, including directing other staff when necessary. In addition to basic Child Protection training, the Designated Member of Staff should undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards set by, the Area Child Protection Committees, and refresher training to keep his/her knowledge and skills up to date. A deputy should be available to act in the designated person's absence.
- All members of staff are given the necessary training to undertake their responsibilities for child protection. This training should be kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals, and temporary staff and volunteers who work with children should be made aware of the arrangement for child protection and their responsibilities.
- The governing body undertake an annual review of the school's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and how the above duties have been discharged

14.2 Members of governing bodies normally appoint one of their number to be the lead governor for Child Protection matters (the 'CP Governor') but nonetheless they must be aware that as a governing body they ultimately share joint responsibility.