

Reviewed: November 2018

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Northumberland PRU fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Rationale

Northumberland PRU believes that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that they cannot learn unless they feel secure. We also believe that all staff working in school have a right to personal support and guidance concerning the protection of pupils. Staff will also need to refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018 (copy on staff share and school office).

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and a whole school protective ethos.

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. (*Appendix 1 – Procedures for Allegations, Appendix 1A – Flow Chart, Appendix 7 – Definitions and Signs of Abuse*)

SUPPORT TO CHILDREN who may have been abused.

SAFER RECRUITMENT AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school including community education staff and governors. Teaching assistants, office staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. (*Appendix 2 – Safer Recruitment of Staff, Appendix 6 – Receipt of CP Policy*)

PREVENTION

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. We will therefore raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep them safe. (*Appendix 3 – Code of Ethical Practice*)

The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment and positive ethos where children feel secure, supported and are encouraged to talk, are listened to, can learn, develop and feel valued
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- include in the curriculum, 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
- 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

PROCEDURES

We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board, and in 'Working together to safeguard children' 2018.

The school will (in accordance with the Education Act 2002 and Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018):

- ensure it has a designated senior member of staff for child protection who has undertaken appropriate training. The training should be updated every two years. There are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available.
- recognise the importance of the role of the designated person for child protection and arrange support and training
- ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers, and onsite contracted services) and every governor knows:
 - the name of the designated person and her/his role
 - that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the NSCB procedures
- where the school's Child Protection Procedures and the NSCB procedures are located (school office)
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the school website.

Provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:

- their personal responsibility
- the NSCB procedures
- the need to be vigilant in identifying signs of abuse
- how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse
- (*Appendix 9 – Training Strategy*)

Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this.

Notify the local children's social care team if:

- it should have to exclude a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
- (whether fixed term or permanently)
- if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan 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)

Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at initial child protection conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences.

- 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 the locality team immediately (*Appendix 1B*)
- ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations
- ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns
- about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed
- sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies (*Appendix 1 – Procedures for Allegations*)

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AT RISK

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence or abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and may not see the world as a safe place or see adults as safe people they can trust. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention and will need to support them in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan. (*Appendix 4 – Children who may be particularly vulnerable*)

The school will endeavour to support the child through:

- the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- the school ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives pupils a sense of being valued
- the school's behaviour recognises the need to support vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- liaison with other services which support the pupil such as targeted support services, CYPS, local Children's Social Care teams, Local Inclusion Support Teams (LISTs), school health etc
- a commitment to develop effective and supportive relationships
- recognition 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 the local Children's Services social care team **as soon as there is a concern** (*Appendix 1C – Monitoring Form for DSP*) and logging incidents on CPOMS under cause for concern category.
- transferring information of a pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan to a new school immediately should that child leave the school

ENSURING SUITABILITY OF ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Compliance with the Disclosure and Barring Service 2012 (previously Vetting and Barring Scheme 2009) and Childcare Disqualification Declaration Form.

The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents.

The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and will be referred to the Police and LADO for investigation (Sexual Offences Act 2003). (*Appendix 13 Dealing with Allegations Against People who Work with Children*)

The school will promote an e-safety policy and when appropriate seek guidance and support from the Local Authority e-safety officer (John Devlin).

The school will promote responsible use of social networking sites by education staff. Please refer to the Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2018.

For advice on dealing with indecent or potentially illegal images of children please see *Appendix 12 – Dealing with Indecent or Potentially Illegal Images of Children*

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body, and is influenced by the DfE publication 'Use of reasonable force 2013'. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

Anti-Bullying

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

Racist Incidents

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

Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body. 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.

Children with additional needs

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour difficulties are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

(Note: It will be important that the policy of Special Schools and mainstream schools with units recognise the vulnerability of children with additional needs, particularly the needs of those with communication difficulties)

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubts about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or outside agency as required.

The Head Teacher or designated person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. (*Appendix 10 – Data Protection & Confidentiality*)

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child or an adult to keep secrets/confidences/disclosures. (*Appendix 8 – Advice on Handling Disclosures*)

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- designate a governor (Richard Bishopp) for child protection who will oversee the schools child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues
- ensure an annual report is made to the governing body on child protection matters to include changes affecting CP policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum
- ensure that this policy is annually updated and reviewed

If the Management Committee provides extended school facilities or before or after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body the Management Committee will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. (*Appendix 5 – Visiting Staff Leaflet*)

If another organisation uses the school premises as part of a letting arrangement then the school will require copies of that organisation's child protection procedures before the letting commences.

Missing from Education

To view Northumberland County Council's policy on reducing the risk of children going missing from education please see *Appendix 11 – Children who go Missing from Education*.

Promoting E-safety in Northumberland Schools.

A comprehensive booklet about e-safety and children is available to download on the Safeguarding area of the Northumberland County Council website.

Our Designated member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues is/are:

- Karen Ayre, Support Services Manager

Deputising arrangements if absent or unavailable

- Tom Dexter, Headteacher
- Rachel Gomersall, Teacher
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Governor responsible for Child Protection is Richard Bishopp.

E-Safety

Our Designated E-Safety Co-ordinator is:

- Sue Ingledew, Placement Administrator
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Governor responsible for E-Safety is Richard Bishopp.

Safer Recruitment and Selection on-line training

One member of the selection panel for staff appointments must have completed either the on-line or face-to-face safer recruitment training:

- Tom Dexter, Headteacher
- Richard Bishopp, Management Committee Member
- Karen Ayre, Support Services Manager

_____ Chair

_____ Date