



POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

INTRODUCTION

Hill House 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 Neighbourhoods, Communities and Children Services (NCCS).

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our 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.

In our school we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. The school ethos promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment giving the pupils a sense of being valued.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, how to behave and who to go to for help.

There are four main elements to our policy:

PREVENTION through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos;

PROCEDURES for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;

SUPPORT TO PUPILS who may have been abused, and

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, ancillary staff, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

1 PREVENTION

- 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, and
 - 1.2.5 work towards the "Every Child Matters" agenda with reference to the 5 outcomes for children.

2 PROCEDURES

- 2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB).
- 2.2 The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Safeguarding (Child Protection).

The school will:

 - 2.1.1 ensure it has a designated member of staff who has undertaken appropriate safeguarding (child

protection) training, and is known as The Child Protection Officer. The CPO will be supported in various areas of the school by Assistants with appropriate training.

- 2.1.2 ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" Ref 04217-2006BKT-EN;
- 2.1.3 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;
- 2.1.4 ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available, and
- 2.1.5 that the designated member of staff will take advice from a safeguarding (child protection) specialist when managing complex cases.

2.2 **The Role of Governors and All School Staff including Volunteers.**

The school will ensure every member of staff, every governor and volunteer knows:

- 2.2.1 the name of the designated person and her/his role and responsibility;
- 2.2.2 that they have an individual responsibility for referring safeguarding (child protection) concerns;
- 2.2.3 they will 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;
- 2.2.4 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 policy.

2.3 Liaison with Other Agencies

The school will:

- 2.3.1 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;
- 2.3.2 notify the allocated Social Worker if:
 - a pupil on the child protection register has been excluded (whether fixed term or permanently);
 - 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.

2.4 Record Keeping

The school will:

- 2.4.1 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 NCCS immediately;
- 2.4.2 ensure all records are kept secure and in a locked location separate from the child's personal file, and
- 2.4.3 ensure that during school residential visits, all staff will have received basis training in safeguarding children. In the event of a child protection issue arising the group leader will contact the designated person at the earliest opportunity.

2.5 Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will:

- 2.5.1 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;

- 2.5.2 via the Head Teacher or Designated Teacher disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only;
- 2.5.3 make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, and
- 2.5.4 all staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child confidentiality.

2.6 **Communication with Parents**

The school will:

- 2.6.1 undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this, and
- 2.6.2 ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.

3 **SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

The school will:

- 3.1 recognise 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 and that it may have a detrimental effect on their well-being;
- 3.2 recognise that it may be the only safe, stable and secure environment in the lives of children at risk and that this may impact on their behaviour, which may be challenging and defiant, or they may become withdrawn;
- 3.3 recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention;
- 3.4 Endeavour to support the pupil through:
 - 3.4.1 its ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued without apportioning blame;
 - 3.4.2 the behaviour policy which is 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;

- 3.4.3 liaison with other appropriate agencies, which support the pupil;
- 3.4.4 a commitment to develop supportive relationships with parents/carers whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so;
- 3.4.5 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, and
- 3.4.6 vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying appropriate agencies as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

3.5 When a pupil on the child protection register transfers to another school, information will be transferred to the new school immediately.

3.6 **Children with Special Educational Needs**

The school recognise 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.

3.7 **Drug Use and Child Protection**

3.7.1 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, or
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/carer drug misuse.

3.8 **Children of Drug Using Parents**

3.8.1 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, leading to a chaotic and unpredictable home environment
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care, or
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

4 **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The school will 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).
- 4.3 The school will 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 The school will 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).

5 **OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

5.1 **Physical Intervention**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. 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 to themselves, another person or property.

5.2 **Anti Bullying**

Our policy on 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.

5.3 **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.

5.4 **Health & Safety**

Our Health & Safety policy is set out in a separate document, and 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 undertaking school trips and visits.

5.5 **Pupil Welfare**

Our pupil welfare policy is set out in a separate document, and is reviewed annually by the governing body. It reflects the consideration we give to the pastoral care and welfare of our children.

6 **GOVERNING BODY SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) RESPONSIBILITIES.**

6.1 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:

6.1.1 has a child protection policy and procedures in place;

6.1.2 operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers;

- 6.1.3 has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
- 6.1.4 has a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues;
- 6.1.5 remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements;
- 6.1.6 has a member of the Governing Body 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, and
- 6.1.7 reviews its policies and procedures annually and provides information to the Local Authority about them, if requested.
- 6.1.8 informs ISI/Ofsted, within 14 days, if a teacher leaves the school with cause for concern.

