

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY - SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

### 1. PURPOSE

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Child Protection Policy is written in accordance with the Children Act 1989; DCSF guidelines; and with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) along with publications Working together and Every Child Matters.

### 2. AIMS

This policy ensures that the school recognizes and implements the following points:

- 2.1 Safe recruitment procedures and practices in checking the suitability of all staff members, in compliance with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
- 2.2 To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- 2.3 To develop, monitor and review procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse (refer to Appendix 1 of this policy)
- 2.4 To support pupils who have been abused in accordance with guidelines (refer to Appendix 1 of this policy).
- 2.5 To establish and maintain a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, be encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- 2.6 A support network for children so that they know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- 2.7 Opportunities in the PSHE and tutorial curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

The school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, safe and predictable element in their life. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may appear withdrawn. In these circumstances, the school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, secure environment and gives the pupils a sense of being valued
- The school ensuring that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are still valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Inter-agency liaison
- Information sharing, in so far as if a pupil suffering abuse leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and key workers are informed where appropriate.

The Child Protection Policy is available to all staff members, in all roles, both electronically in the shared area and in hard copy in the Staff Room. It is also available to parents on request. In addition, we recognise, understand and implement the obligations placed on the school in terms of Child Protection which is promoted in the school prospectus, the pupil handbooks and the Information for Parents handbooks.

The school operates a strict safer recruitment system in accordance with NSCL on-line training. All members of staff, in all roles, are CRB checked at enhanced level, and appropriate records kept in personnel files in adherence with the Data Protection Act. During the interview process, all candidates must fill in an application form, which ensures that any gaps in employment are identified and explained. All short-list interview panels will include a member of staff who has completed the on-line Safer Recruitment training. Human Resources will ensure that identity checks are conducted, references and qualifications are verified, and CRB disclosures are obtained. Once all this is in place a contract can be issued.

**The Principal of Bell Bedgebury, Mr Eric Squires, is the current Designated Child Protection Officer for the school. The two Deputy Child Protection Officers are Miss Rebecca Appleyard (Deputy Head Pastoral, Bell Bedgebury International School) and Matt Wikeley (Deputy Head, Bell Language and Activities Programme). Mrs Ellen Fleming, Chair of Governors is the Governor responsible for Child Protection. Emma Palfrey-Rogers is the Designated Independent Listener for the Bedgebury pupils.**

The INSET and induction programmes ensure that all staff members understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for Child Protection. The majority of staff members, in all roles, have been trained in Child Protection procedures. This is carried out through their induction programme and staff are also asked to complete an NSPCC Child Protection pack which contains key information, a test and successful staff receive a certificate. Staff who fail to pass the test are asked to complete it again. All boarding staff are also asked to complete the on-line Safer Recruitment training within their first year of joining the school. A register of staff training, including Child Protection is passed to Human Resources and kept in staff files and on a training register.

Senior pupils given positions of responsibility over other pupils are briefed by the site Child Protection Officer on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse.

There is a policy known to staff and used in practice, for searching for and, if necessary reporting, any boarder missing from school (and recording any incident, the action taken and the reasons given by the pupil for being missing).

Once an employee has left the school, we recognise and accept the 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 s/he is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Students with child protection issues have separate files as well as main school files. The main school file is given a red dot indicating that there are on-going CP concerns and caution should be taken when issuing information to staff. The corresponding CP file for each of these students is kept locked in the Designated Child Protection Officer's office.

The school meets the requirements that any weaknesses or discrepancies in Child Protection which may occur from time to time are brought to the attention of the DCPO or Senior Management Team and rectified without delay.

### **KEY CONTACT DETAILS**

- Kent Police Tel: 01622 690 690
- Doctor : Dr Hilary Llewellyn MB Bch, The Old Parsonage Surgery, Back Lane, Goudhurst, Kent TN17 1AN, Tel : 01580 211 241
- Hospitals : Kent and Sussex Tel: 01892 526 111 or Pembury Tel: 01892 823 535
- Kent Social Services : Mon-Fri Tel: 01622 605 609, Out of hours or emergency Tel: 0845 762 6777
- NSPCC (Head Office) Tel: 0207 7825 2500
- NSPCC Childline Tel: 0800 1111
- NSPCC Adult helpline Tel : 0808 800 5000

### **TRAINING OF KEY STAFF**

- Mr Eric Squires – NSPCC Designated Child Protection Officer training (April 2010)
- Mr Matt Wikeley – NSPCC Designated Child Protection Officer training (September 2009)
- Miss Rebecca Appleyard – Worcestershire County Council Advanced Child Protection Training level C (October 2008)

## APPENDIX I

### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

#### STAFF GUIDELINES

What are the indicators of a potential Child Protection issue?

Physical abuse – what to look for:

- Injuries, especially those which are atypical
- Students who find it painful to walk, sit down, move their jaws etc
- Regular occurrence of injuries with no adequate explanation
- Reluctance to change for PE
- Uncharacteristic behaviour
- Compulsive eating or loss of appetite
- Student who is suddenly uncoordinated
- Conflicting explanations of injuries
- Reluctance to explain

Neglect – what to look for:

- Deterioration in appearance or hygiene
- Deterioration in behaviour
- Deterioration in academic performance

Emotional abuse – what to look for:

- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Introversion
- Excessive aggression

Sexual abuse - what to look for:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour
- An apparent fear of someone
- Reluctance to get undressed in sporting or other activities where in changing into other clothes is normal

Some points to consider:

- Many forms of abuse have no physical symptoms
- The diagnosis of abuse is difficult – even for experts
- To delay reporting the suspicion of abuse could be disastrous

Every situation pertaining to Child Protection is different but the following guidelines should always be followed:

- Do not promise confidentiality – explain that if a child is at risk you will need to pass information on
- Do not seek to discover more details – trained personnel will do this if it becomes necessary
- Record the time and date of the conversation and as many details as you can remember as soon as possible
- Tell the Designated Child Protection Officer immediately (if an allegation is made against the DCPO, then tell the Chair of Governors). Even if you are not sure that the issue you have encountered is serious, still let the DCPO know. They can then make an informed decision as to the best course of action.

You should also have the following advice in mind:

- If you cannot find the DCPO, then the Deputy CPO's will help.
- Try not to tell other people about the situation – this will cloud information later.
- If you have been upset/distressed, the school will seek professional advice/counselling on your behalf. However, this cannot proceed until the Child Protection case has been investigated by professional agencies.
- If the accusation is against a colleague, please follow the same procedures. Remember, an allegation may be true and the pupil needs protection. However, it may be untrue, in which case a colleague should have the right to clear their name. In cases such as this, your anonymity will be protected as far as practically possible.
- All information is treated in the strictest confidence. Sometimes it may become necessary to share information but those providing it will be involved in how this comes out and have the right to confidentiality.

What are we likely to do with information you provide?

- At least record it; it may not seem significant straight away but may add to further information received at a later date.
- Telephone professional agencies for advice without giving names (the DCPO and the school will always be named).
- Telephone professional agencies for advice, providing names so that they can check records.
- Make a full referral
- All inter-agency contact details can be accessed through the DCPO.
- **All Child Protection records are kept securely and separate from pupil files in a locked location.**

The Child Protection Officer will always let you know what will happen to information you provide. Where practically possible, and with the advice of professional agencies, the anonymity of a referring colleague will be protected.

Colleagues must also be aware of appropriate conduct with pupils in order to avoid allegations and misunderstandings.

- Avoid all physical contact with pupils
- Do not be alone with a pupil. Where it is absolutely necessary take appropriate steps to mitigate the situation eg. Leave doors open, report timetabled or scheduled meetings to your line manager
- Do not allow pupils into your car
- Do not give pupils personal contact details (eg. Mobile telephone numbers, home email addresses etc)
- Do not exchange personal or private information/opinions with students
- If you have any concerns regarding an incident or pupil behaviour in the light of these guidelines, please pass them to the DCPO.

**Failure to follow these instructions will put staff at risk of allegations and may in some circumstances lead to disciplinary action.**

### **Physical Restraint**

There may be times when adults, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. We follow the guidance given in the DCSF circular published in November 2007 on The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. The Principal (who is the DCPO) will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to him immediately, and to record it on the Interventions Book, kept by the DCPO.

**Please refer to your contract and the staff handbook for the school's disciplinary procedures.**

**If an allegation involving Child Protection is made against an employee, they will be suspended on full pay and without prejudice pending investigation. A resident employee will be offered accommodation elsewhere during this period.**

March 2010

## APPENDIX II

### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

#### **'EVERY CHILD MATTERS'**

The paper entitled 'Every Child Matters' was initially presented to parliament in September 2003. This paper promoted the five key outcomes that were considered to really matter for the well-being of children and young people.

**a. Being healthy**

Physical and mental health : Pupils enjoy a good and healthy lifestyle so that they are physically healthy; mentally and emotionally healthy; sexually healthy; have healthy lifestyles; and be able to make choices, for example not to take illegal drugs.

**b. Staying safe**

Protection from harm and neglect: Pupils' welfare is safeguarded and they know how to stay safe from accidental injury and death; safe from maltreatment, neglect and sexual exploitation; safe from bullying and discrimination; safe from crime and anti-social behaviour; safe from exposure to violence.

**c. Enjoying and achieving**

Education and training: Pupils enjoy and make good progress in their learning, leisure and personal development. They are ready for school, attend regularly and enjoy school; achieve good educational standards at primary school; achieve personal development and enjoy recreation; achieve good education standards at secondary school.

**d. Making a positive contribution**

Contribution to society: Pupils join in, take responsibility and play a productive part in the community. They engage in decision making; support the community and environment; choose not to offend, re-offend or engage in anti-social behaviour; choose not to bully or discriminate; develop self-confidence and enterprising behaviour.

**e. Economic well-being**

Achieve economic well-being: Children and young people enjoy a good start in life and are able to achieve their full potential and secure employment. They are prepared to engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school; are ready for employment; have a desire to live in a decent home and community; have the skills and ambition to access transport and material goods and to strive for a good income.

#### **Summary of 'Every Child Matters' December 2004**