



ST LAURENCE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Protection Procedures

Adopted by the Leadership team – July 2013

Ratified by full Governors - September 2013

Signed Chair of Governors _____

Date _____

To be reviewed- July 2014

ST LAURENCE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The following guidelines provide staff with information on action to be taken with regard to Child Protection issues. Further information can be found in the Child Protection Guidelines stored in the Head of School's office.

ALL STAFF **MUST** READ **THIS** DOCUMENT AND BE AWARE OF THE ADVICE IT OFFERS.

School staff have a pastoral responsibility towards children and often are in regular contact with parents and other family members. They therefore are in the front line of child protection. It is essential that **all staff** in direct contact with children in the school are aware of the locally agreed **Interagency Guidelines** and act upon them in all cases of suspected abuse. School staff must also appreciate that they may be required to substantiate their concerns once a case has been referred in accordance with the guidelines. School staff may be expected to attend and participate in case conferences and meetings held under these guidelines.

All staff in the school must be aware of the limitation of their role in cases of suspected child abuse and appreciate that it is for other agencies, with statutory responsibilities, to take action **beyond that of first referral**. In particular, staff *must avoid* "interviewing children suspected of suffering or who are likely to suffer from child abuse.

The Local Authority has designated a senior officer (Anne Walker) within the Education Department with responsibility for co-ordinating policy and procedures with other agencies. Each school has a designated senior member of staff to act as "link person" in the school. The link person will co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with other agencies in accordance with these guidelines in addition the link persons have responsibility to undertake training and disseminate information within their schools.

The designated link person for St Laurence's CE Primary School is the Executive Head teacher (or in his absence the Learning Mentor, then the Head of School).

All concerns, suspicions, relevant information and observations MUST be shared with the Executive Head (Head of School) or Learning Mentor immediately.

St Laurence's CE Primary School will deal with Child Protection issues in accordance with the Coventry Area Child Protection Committee Inter-Agency Guidelines. (Documents lodged in the Head of Schools' office).

Recognition of Abuse

Child abuse is defined under four broad categories namely neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

It is comparatively rare for school to be the referring agency. Often concerns shared by staff centre on lack of appropriate care rather than the more obvious indicators of abuse. Nevertheless, teachers must be vigilant. It may be that a comment or change in behaviour from a child could be a small but significant part of a number of indicators, which, when taken together, raise sufficient concern for a referral to be made.

Physical Contact with Pupils

Research has demonstrated the instinctive nature of touch and its beneficial effects particularly with young children. Indeed children deprived of this touch and contact can be psychologically deprived. At our school we support the ethos which encourages the development of a warm and loving relationship with our pupils and each other. Children often hug staff and visitors spontaneously.

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and re-assurance which may include the physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Staff need, however, to be aware of the limits within which such contact should take place.

Staff should avoid being alone with a child. They should guard against taking a child onto their knee, and should exercise care when giving a quick hug. Staff are likely to come into physical contact with children in the course of their work, for example when showing pupils how to use items of apparatus or equipment, while demonstrating a move or exercise during PE or games, or giving First aid. Staff should exercise care in such situations, so that there can be no misunderstanding on the part of pupils, parents or other staff.

Young children should be encouraged to dress themselves, where help is needed the member of staff should not be alone with the child.

When giving First Aid staff should exercise particular care. Where clothing may need to be removed or adjusted the child's consent should be sought, and at least another adult should be present.

Refer to Staff handbook Section 35.

Role of the Teacher

Staff should note carefully what they have observed and when they observed it. Signs of physical injury should be described in detail or sketched. It is important to record any physical injury **without** adjustment to clothing.

Any comment by the child concerned, or by an adult who might be the abuser about how an injury occurred, should be recorded, preferably quoting words actually used after the comment has been made, It is important that the receiving teacher **listens** to the child's account and indicates that she/he is willing to believe what is being said.

THE TEACHER SHOULD NOT ASK LEADING QUESTIONS OR INTERVIEW THE CHILD NOR SHOULD THE TEACHER PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.

(This later point is because once a disclosure is made, the person to whom the disclosure has been made has a statutory responsibility to pass on the information to the 'link person' who then has to refer to Social Services).

Information should be recorded on the relevant proforma as described in the Education Service Guidelines. The link person (Executive Headteacher) (Head of School) will contact the relevant Social Services Team.

The Executive Headteacher (Head of School) holds all confidential information on child protection. The proforma should not be used to record alleged abuse by employees.

There is a nominated Governor with responsibility for Child Protection, and this person is Mrs Cleveland.

Following a referral Social Services may initiate a Child Protection investigation this may result in a planning or strategy meeting or a Child Protection Case Conference.

Parents will usually be in attendance at the case conference and will therefore have access to **all** information, so any information recorded is in the public arena. (Education (School Records) regulations 1989)

Care of Staff

Involvement in Child Protection investigations can be a difficult and unpleasant experience for staff, as well as for the child and family. It is important that staff have the opportunity to share their feelings, and anxieties about the incident, the process, and their involvement. The Executive Head (Head of School) undertakes to offer appropriate personal and professional support at each stage including:

- Preparation for attendance at pre-investigation meetings or case conferences.
- Dealing with feelings such as guilt, embarrassment, revulsion
- Restoring relationships with the family

Contact Numbers

Children and Families Team – Wood End – Bell Green
(Covering the Foleshill/Bell Green/Wood end areas amongst others)

Address: Moat House Centre
Telephone: 02476 785568
Emergency Duty Team: (for out of office hours): 02476 832222