



## Child Protection Policy

### Introduction

The school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002, section 175
- Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
- DfES guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2006
- HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2010) requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse established by their Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Schools must ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding where they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse. The procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

DCSF (now DfE) guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' 2006 states that "All parents need to understand that schools and FE colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils or students, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures, and that a school or FE college may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare."

### 1. Aims of the policy

- To provide an environment and foster a school community supportive of the aims of Willington School
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of 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
- To develop a structured procedure within the school to 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 Services
- To ensure that all adults within the school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff

### 2. Procedures

Willington School procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Local Education Authority (LEA) and the LSCB procedures. The school will ensure that:

- The Designated Senior Person is **Liz Rissen** along with **Simon Tyley** who both undertake regular training
- The **designated governor** is to be confirmed at the next Governors' Meeting
- The staff are trained to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- The staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures
- Procedures are regularly reviewed and updated
- The governing body is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of the child protection procedures as part of their induction into the school. They will be made aware of the role of the Designated Senior Person(s)



### 3. Responsibilities

#### a. Responsibilities of Governors and Senior Managers

It is the role of the governors and senior managers to take responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This is a shared responsibility and requires:

- Having clear lines of responsibility
- Having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all new staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people
- Having procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- Making sure that the staff get appropriate training
- Having clearly understood and working procedures on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people
- Working with the child's parents to support their child's needs
- Helping parents understand that the school, like all others, has a responsibility for the welfare of all pupils and has a duty to refer cases to Social Care in the interests of the child
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements to be remedied without delay
- Ensuring that children receive appropriate and timely preventative interventions when required
- Notifying the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) of the name of any member of staff considered to be 'unsuitable to work' with children in accordance with statutory regulations. Where the school provides after school or holiday club services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for safeguarding will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing body should seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and that there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

#### b. The Designated Senior Person (DSP) has the following responsibilities to:

- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommend guidance from the LSCB and LEA
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns
- Keep written records of concerns about a child even there is no need to make an immediate referral
- Ensure that all such records are stored confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records
- Ensure that the head teacher is kept fully informed of any concerns
- Monitor register attendance and absences for all pupils; inform Social Care if a child is absent without explanation for two days if currently subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Submit reports to and attend child protection conferences
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the LSCB's Child Protection Procedures
- Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Liaise with Social Care teams over suspected cases of child abuse
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support
- Make a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the pupil's interests to do so
- Inform the social worker responsible where a pupil who is / or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, and transfer the appropriate records to the DSP at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file



### c. Reporting

The reporting of Safeguarding practice at Willington School enables the governing body to ensure compliance with current legislation and to identify areas for improvement. Close liaison with the local authority is vital in order that appropriate support and training can be given. These are requirements of 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (DfES 2006).

At the governing body meeting each term a Safeguarding report will be given. The Designated Senior Person will liaise with the governor responsible for Safeguarding once each term and in addition whenever appropriate. It is important to protect the anonymity of the children concerned and discretion should be used to avoid the identification of individuals.

## 4. Training

Summary of Child Protection Training:

- Designated Senior Persons must undertake training every two years
- Teaching and other staff should have training updated every three years
- It is recommended that all school governors attend governor child protection training

## 5. Related policies and documents

Please see Appendix A

## 6. Abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or inciting a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:



- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### 7. Concerns

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he or she:

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with an accidental injury
- Regularly has unexplained injuries
- Frequently has some injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given)
- Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and / or inappropriate to his or her age / stage of development
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed

In addition, any other cause for believing that a child may be suffering harm should be reported.

### 8. Dealing with a disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Social Care or other agencies
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Pass information to the Designated Senior Person without delay
- NOT allow the child to be interviewed a second time. Accept what the child says and report to the Designated Senior Person

a. General points on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse:

- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – **don't promise confidentiality**
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen

b. Helpful things to say:

- I understand what you are saying
- Thank you for telling me



- It's not your fault
- I will help you

c. Things not to say:

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

d. At the end of the conversation:

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Contact the appropriate senior member of staff or agency
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed

### **9. Record keeping**

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
- Give all records to the Designated Senior Person promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer

### **10. Support following a disclosure**

a. Supporting staff

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff or volunteer should consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Senior Person who can seek support from the appropriate governor or from the LSCB if required.

b. Supporting children The school will endeavour to support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence 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

### **11. Confidentiality**

All matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.

- The head teacher or Designated Senior 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
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets

### **12. Whistle blowing**

It is recognised that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. The school will ensure that all staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to the Designated Senior Person, the head teacher or the chair of the governing body.



### 13. Appointment of staff

School procedures for appointing staff are in line with the 'Child Protection: Essential Guidance for Education staff; Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and selection in Education Settings' (DfES 2005) and the LSCB procedures. These will be reviewed regularly in the light of new legislation and guidance.

Safeguarding issues must be at the forefront in the recruitment processes for both teaching and non-teaching staff. The appointment process is designed to deter potential offenders from applying. All applicants are required to complete application forms that are designed to prompt interviewers to spot frequent job changes and movement around the country. They state the primacy of child protection concerns at the school and require a declaration of past convictions and whether or not the candidate is on any ISA list that disqualifies them from working with children.

References are taken up in advance, and interviews include questions regarding child protection issues.

All applicants who are offered employment in posts involving access to children (whether teachers or support staff) will be subject to a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure before the appointment is confirmed. Other adults who may come into direct contact with pupils as part of their business with the school or on an infrequent basis (coach drivers, parents helping on trips) will be subject to an appropriate check which may include a CRB Disclosure. Any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies, including the ISA. In line with current guidance, any serious concern raised, whether proven or not, will be reported in staff references.

### 14. Allegations involving school staff

- All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child
- All staff should be aware of the school's behaviour/discipline policy
- If a pupil or parent makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the headmaster. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including details of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation
- The headmaster will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements but assess whether it is necessary to refer the matter to Social Care in accordance with the safeguarding procedures. In doing so, the head teacher will consult with relevant agencies
- If the head teacher decides that the allegation warrants further action through Safeguarding procedures he/she must make a referral direct to the local Social Care team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence, it will be necessary to contact Social Care before informing the member of staff
- Careful consideration needs to be given to the suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made. Any suspension is seen as a neutral action and does not predict the outcome of any disciplinary process. The chair of the governing body will be consulted before a final decision is made
- If it is decided that this is not necessary to refer the matter to Social Care the head teacher will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation
- If the complaint made to a member of staff concerns the head teacher, the person receiving the complaint will immediately inform the governor chair who will follow the procedures above without first notifying the head teacher

### 15. Allegations involving the Headteacher

Allegations involving the Headteacher should be directed to the The Chair of Governors (Mr. Brian Whitmore – address and contact details available from School Office) who will investigate the allegations with the link Governor for CP Mrs Di Griffin.

### 16. Physical intervention/positive handling

- The School acknowledges 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



- If the physical intervention is of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child it may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures
- Staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.

### **17. Bullying**

The school has a separate bullying policy. It acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to issues under safeguarding procedures. The school also issues separate advice and guidance regarding Internet Safety & Cyber Bullying (cf)

### **18. Racist comments**

Racist comments will not be tolerated and repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under safeguarding procedures. The school maintains a racist log-book.

### **19. Inappropriate relationships**

Under no circumstances should inappropriate relationships be encouraged between adults and children. Staff should be aware that the Sexual Offences Act 2003 created a new criminal offence of abuse of trust and a new offence of meeting a child following sexual grooming. Where a member of staff is concerned that a pupil has developed a crush or attachment to them, they should report this to the Designated Senior Person and should discourage social exchanges with them that are in any way different from those of the rest of their peers. Staff should at all times have regard for their professional responsibilities and for their conduct to ensure that they uphold the letter and spirit of this policy in safeguarding children.

### **20. Lone working**

Lone working with individual children should be avoided if at all possible. However, it is recognised that there will be occasions when there is no alternative. The following guidelines should be considered by staff:

- Let another member of staff that they are alone with a child
- Keep the door open to the room that they are in or ensure they are in a room with an uncovered glass panel in the door
- If this is a regular occurrence (such as regular individual music lessons), the child's parent/carer should be informed of the situation
- Should anything happen during the session that makes the staff member uncomfortable, this should be reported to the Designated Senior Person immediately
- Children should only be given lifts in cars with the express permission of either the Designated Senior Person or the headmaster

### **21. Curriculum links / prevention**

- The pastoral care system, tutor system, PSHE assemblies, PSHE curriculum, school council and other pastoral activities facilitate a supportive school community
- There is a strong ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to
- All children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Curriculum opportunities are included which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help both whilst at school and in the future

### **22. Monitoring & Review**

The Child Protection Policy is reviewed at least annually as part of the Governors' portfolio of policies, by the designated Senior Person and the designated CP Governor. It may be reviewed more regularly if there are changes in legislation or guidance.

***L.Rissen(Child Protection Officer) : May 2011***

***Di Griffin (Governor): May 2011***



## ACTION FLOW CHART

DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

RECORD INFORMATION AND PASS ON TO CPO's  
LIZ RISSEN or SIMON TYLEY

CPO REPORTS TO HEAD AND SHARES INFORMATION

IN URGENT SITUATIONS, WHEN A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 999 THEN  
INFORM SOCIAL SERVICES

OR

CALL SOCIAL SERVICES, CHILD PROTECTION TEAM AND PASS ON INFORMATION

OR

IF MANAGEMENT IS IMPLICATED IN SOMEWAY, OR YOUR CONCERNS ARE NOT DEALT  
WITH, BYPASS CPO/HEAD AND CONTACT SOCIAL SERVICES/POLICE

### Useful Contacts:

Sutton and Merton CP advice Line 0208 687 4508

Merton Social Services, Child Protection Team 0208 545 4226 / 4227

Wimbledon Police Station 0208 947 1212

Emergency 999

NSPCC (National CP Helpline) 0808 800 5000