

Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Policy for Grimoldby Primary School

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Area Child protection Committee Code of Practice (LACPC) The Red Book

Introduction

All those working at Grimoldby Primary School contribute to the safe guarding of pupils and protecting all these pupils who are in our care. We have a pastoral responsibility towards these pupils and will work together in the prevention of abuse and neglect, through our policies and procedures. We will create and maintain a safe environment for these pupils and manage situations where there may be child welfare concerns. Pupils will be helped to understand what is and what is not acceptable behaviour towards them and taught about staying safe from harm and how to speak up if they have concerns or worries. The curriculum will play a preventative role in preparing pupils for their future responsibilities as adults, parents and carers.

The Headteacher and Governors of the school will ensure the school follows safe recruitment practices in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with pupils while in our care. A Governor and the Headteacher will undergo training at suitable times to ensure they are kept up to date with national initiatives with regard to Safer Recruitment. The school will follow the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Vetting and Barring Scheme advice when recruiting and appointing new members of staff.

Through day to day work contact with pupils and their families all staff will play a crucial role in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and in referring concerns to the appropriate agency, normally the Social services department. When a pupil has special educational needs or is disabled, schools we will have important information about the pupil's level of understanding and the most effective means of communicating with the pupil. We will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the pupil's care or behaviour.

Section 175 of the Education Act (2002) states:

- (1) A local education authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that the functions conferred on them in their capacity as a local authority are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- (2) The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are the pupils at the school.

No one who is involved in any way with the care of children can escape responsibility for identifying the signs of child abuse and having done so for taking appropriate action as outlined below.

The **designated teacher** acts as a focal point for all matters concerning child protection. One of the primary tasks is to act as the contact between school, the family and the child protection team.

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Incidents of possible child abuse obviously need to be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality consistent with the multi-disciplinary approach. If there is any cause for concern whatsoever it is vital that the information is passed to the **designated teacher** immediately. In the event, following statutory investigation, of concerns proving to be unfounded, staff should not reproach themselves for having raised the issue. In cases of this nature it is always better to be safe than sorry. Staff also have the right to share concerns directly with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board customer services centre (Tel. 01522 782111 or Out of hours 01522 782333) or the police if they feel this is appropriate.

The following procedures must be adhered to

The school will:

- Ensure that the designated teacher has undertaken the LACPC's 4 day Foundation Course.
- Ensure that every member of staff and every governor knows:
 - * the name of the designated teacher (Headteacher)
 - * that they have individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the Code of Practice.
 - * where the red book is situated.
- Ensure that members of staff and volunteers receive training on signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to respond appropriately to a pupil who may disclose abuse.
- Ensure parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection and have access to the school's child protection policy.
- Ensure that safe recruitment practices, which provide for appropriate checks, are in place and are followed in respect of all new staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively.

The Governing body will:

- Ensure that the school reviews its child protection policy annually.
- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements are brought to the attention of the governing body and are remedied without delay.
- Ensure that a member of the governing body is nominated to be responsible for the liaising with the LEA and/or partner agencies, as appropriate in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher.

Child needing immediate medical treatment

If a child comes to school in need of immediate medical treatment they should initially be taken to the school's designated first-aider, where appropriate action will be taken. This may involve:

- A call or delivery to the local doctors
- Delivery to hospital
- Call to emergency services

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If in the judgement of the **designated teacher**, there are indications that the cause of the problem may be related to child abuse, the medical professionals must be informed. The **designated teacher** must refer to the Social Services.

Provision of medical treatment should not be delayed by attempts to contact parent or guardian in advance and in some cases of suspected child abuse it would be appropriate to alert parents.

Child about whom there is a suspicion of possible abuse but no need for immediate medical treatment

- If it is believed that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, even in the absence of any physical evidence, this should be brought to the attention of the statutory child protection services immediately.
- The **designated teacher** should make referral to Social Services
- It is good practice for professionals to discuss any concerns they have with the family and, where possible, to seek the family's agreement to making a referral to Social Services. Full details of any such conversation should be recorded. However there exceptional circumstances where such discussion and agreement seeking would place the child at increased risk of significant harm. In these circumstances it can be appropriate to refer without agreement of the family, although the source of the referral will be subsequently be disclosed to the family by Social Services. In cases where a professional is acting in good faith on third party information it may not be appropriate for Social services to reveal the source of the referral. In either event Social Services will advise the professional of their decision on this point.
- Other factors relevant to the discussion to refer without prior discussion with the family include:
 - * Issues of staff safety
 - * The risk of destroying evidence
 - * The likelihood of children or other family members being intimidated
 - * The possibility of an increased risk of domestic violence
 - * The possibility of the family moving to avoid professional scrutiny
- Teachers must not themselves take any further action although if a parent/guardian or other individual volunteers information this should be recorded.
- On referral to Social Services the **designated teacher** needs to be clear about:
 - * The nature of the concerns
 - * How and why they have arisen
 - * What appear to be the needs of the child and family, including any special needs arising from cultural, physical, psychological, medical or other factors.
 - * If known, what other agencies and professionals are involved with the child and family.
 - * His/her expectations of Social Services
 - * The action to be taken by Social Services
 - * The action to be taken, and by whom, if any agreed plan is not carried out.

Where disclosure is made:

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- Reassurance is given to the child
- The child will be listened to
- The child will not be questioned
- Promises will not be made to the child regarding not sharing the information in the disclosure

Records will be made to include:

- The child's name, full address, date of birth
- Date and time of disclosure/observation
- Exact record of disclosure
- Name of person to whom disclosure was made
- Name of any third party present
- Records will be kept separately and securely from the child's main records with limited access
- Completion of the CAF form

All verbal communications should be confirmed in writing, using the CAF (Common Assessment Form) within 24 hours

- The designated teacher must contact the custodian of the Child Protection register even if the case is well known to him/her and other agencies. The number of interrogations and their origins can be used to build up composite picture of the situation regarding a particular child. Staff should not hesitate to interrogate the register. During office hours this is done by contacting the Child protection and reviewing Unit on 01522 513793 or 01522 554061. At other times the Emergency Duty Team should be contacted on 01529 413366.

Interrogation of the Child protection register does not in itself constitute a referral.

Additional Requirements:

- The **designated teacher** should keep handwritten records, timed, dated and signed, of any signs of abuse, neglect or any other injury and of any action taken. He/she should record the circumstances which caused the concern and indicate any injuries on the body map provided. Any explanation or comments made by the child or their carer need to be recorded in their exact words if possible. It should also be recorded whether or not the family have been informed of the reasons for the concern and the actions taken by the **designated teacher**.

It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate suspicions of child abuse but to pass on all relevant information to Social Services. Any investigations conducted by the school are potentially detrimental to the formal investigative process and ultimately to the safety of the child in question.

- Where others, such as Educational Welfare Officers, Youth Workers or Educational Psychologists are involved, the designated teacher should check with them to see if they have any concerns. Their comments should be noted and passed on with the referral to Social Services.

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- Following a Child Protection Investigation where the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of harm, the Social services Directorate will convene a Child Protection Conference. It is expected that the designated teacher will attend. If they are unable to attend for unavoidable reasons, or send a representative, they should submit a written report in the format provided by the LEA (see **Designated Teachers handbook**). **It is essential that schools are represented at conference and that they actively participate in any Child Protection Plan for children on their school roll.**
- If following a Child Protection Investigation, concerns are substantiated but the child is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm, the Social Services Directorate may decide that a plan for the child's future safety and welfare can be implemented without the need to convene a Child Protection Conference. If the designated teacher still has serious concerns that a child may not otherwise be adequately safeguarded he/she can request that Social Services convene a Child Education Directorate's Senior Liaison Officer.

Section C of the Code of Practice describes more fully Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and Reviews.

- The senior teacher will act as the head in their absence and become the designated teacher be unavailable. In any event reporting suspicion of child abuse should not be delayed.

Where an allegation is made against a staff member

Where any member of staff becomes aware of an allegation of child abuse made against a colleague Child Protection Procedures **must** be followed. The Headteacher must be notified or, where the allegation is against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors must be informed. **All allegations of alleged or suspected abuse must be considered by the statutory agencies, where the allegations involve:**

- * **Sexual abuse**
- * **Physical assault**
- * **Serious or repeated intimidation**

This applies even where the nature of the alleged assault would not normally meet the threshold applied to children in their own families. For example, a report of a child being smacked by a parent, with no injury caused, would be unlikely to require any response by Police or Social services. However, a similar report of a child being smacked by a teacher should be responded to because of:

- * **The vulnerability of children away from home**
- * **The higher standards of conduct demanded by law and regulation of those caring for other people's children**
- * **The position of trust enjoyed by such people**

Full details of how to respond to an allegation made against a member of staff can be found in the **Designated Teacher's Handbook** and the code of practice. **It is not the responsibility of the school to investigate allegations made against staff. A multi-agency strategy meeting will be convened by Social Services to decide on how the investigation will proceed. This meeting will also include the Human resources Advisor for the school. All allegations should be reported to the senior Liaison Officer.**

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- Further details on specific issues such as restraint, intimate care, Internet use, educational visits and safe recruitment of staff and volunteers can be found in the Designated Teacher's Handbook.
- Advice on any aspect of Child Protection can be sought from the Education Directorate's Senior Liaison Officer. Mrs Sheridan Dodsworth is contactable on 01522 554674.

Supporting families:

- We acknowledge that parents will be the first point of contact and they will be informed of any suspicions **unless** this is deemed likely to put a child at risk
- We will follow the guidelines laid down by the area safeguarding children's board
- The setting, through the safeguarding children policy will inform parents of their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children
- The setting will continue to welcome children and work with their families throughout any investigation

Signed: Mrs. M. Barnes

Date: May 2009

Review Date May 2010