

**FORMAL DOCUMENT**  
for  
**COURT de WYCK Church of England Primary School**

<b>Topic: Child Protection</b>		Document Type: Policy
<b>Related Documents:</b> North Somerset Child Protection Committee Multi-Agency Procedures. DFEE circular 10/95. The Childrens Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999. Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000. What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2003 Safeguarding children in education DfES 2004 These sources are mostly web-based; any person who wishes to check them can apply to the School for a full URL		
Date of current Review: Summer 2007	Reviewed by (position): SENCO and CP Governor	
Name: A. Harwood	Signature: RD Clerk to Governors	
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**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002. To safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the School to identify, assess, and support those pupils who are suffering harm.
- 1.2 Current documents are located in the PPA room for reference at any time.
- 1.3 The designated teacher for Child Protection is the Deputy Headteacher and in her absence the Headteacher. Should both The Deputy and The Headteacher be absent, the matter should then be referred to another member of the Senior Management Team who will take advice on further actions.

**2.0 Aims**

- 2.1 The School strives to educate all its pupils within an environment where the Christian traditions of learning, truth, justice, respect and community are promoted. Consequently the overall aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils in the School's care. In situations where child-abuse is suspected, the paramount responsibility is to the pupil.
- 2.2 This will be achieved by:
  - 2.2.1 continuing to develop awareness in all staff of the need for Child Protection (particular care should be taken with pupils with disabilities and SEN) and their responsibilities in identifying abuse.
  - 2.2.2 ensuring that all staff are aware of referral procedures within the School;
  - 2.2.3 ensuring that outside agencies are involved where appropriate;

2.2.4 ensuring that key concepts of Child Protection are integrated within the curriculum especially *via* PHSE&C;

2.2.5 creating an environment where pupils feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

### 3.0 School Procedures

3.1 Any member of staff with an issue or concern relating to Child Protection (it should be made clear to pupils that **CONFIDENTIALITY CANNOT BE GUARANTEED IN RESPECT OF CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES**) should immediately discuss it with the Deputy Headteacher who is the designated Child Protection Teacher. Allegations of child-abuse must always be given the highest priority and referred immediately.

3:2 The Deputy Headteacher will then decide on an appropriate course of action.

3:3 Information for parents/carers will be published in the School prospectus.

3:4 The School's selection and recruitment procedures include appropriate checks on staff.

### 4.0 Dealing With Disclosures of Abuse

4.1 If a pupil chooses to tell a member of staff about possible abuse there are a number of things that should be done to support the pupil:

4.1.1 stay calm and be available to listen;

4.1.2 listen with the utmost care to what the pupil is saying;

4.1.3 question normally without pressurising;

4.1.4 don't put words into the pupil's mouth, but note the main points carefully;

4.1.5 keep a full record – date, time, what the pupil did, said, etc;

4.1.6 reassure the pupil and let them know they were right to inform the School;

4.1.7 inform the pupil that this information will now have to be passed on;

4.1.8 immediately inform the Deputy Headteacher, or when absent the Headteacher.

4.1.9 it is important that school staff do not investigate cases of suspected abuse themselves.

### 5.0 Monitoring & Record-Keeping

5.1 It is essential that accurate records be kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. These records are kept in confidential files, which are separate from the child's school records and are located in the PPA room locked in the medicine cabinet. It is important to recognise that regulations published in 1989 do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of any written information relating to Child Protection. Although the preferred practice is for parents to be informed of and agree to any referral being made (unless it relates to Sexual Abuse).

5.2 Staff must keep the Deputy Headteacher informed of:

5.2.1 poor attendance & punctuality;

5.2.2 concerns about appearance and dress;

5.2.3 changed or unusual behaviour;

5.2.4 concerns about health and emotional well being;

5.2.5 deterioration in educational progress;

5.2.6 discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child;

5.2.7 concerns about home conditions or situations;

5.3 These records will be kept as a diary in an exercise book in the teacher's tray.

5.4 The child-protection teacher must be informed of entries that are made.

5.5 When there is suspicion of significant harm to a pupil and a referral is made as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the pupil and the

family. Use of previous records (if available) may prove to be particularly useful in this regard.

**NB** Any referral to Social Services by telephone must be confirmed with the written form or a letter as specified by the Duty Social Worker and dependant on the family circumstances. A copy must be kept in the confidential School file. A note must be made of the name of the Duty Social Worker and the time at which the call is made, and any notes about the discussion added to this, the form then forms part of the confidential records. A copy of the referral must also be sent to the EWO at the Town Hall. **If parents have not been informed about (or if they have agreed to) the referral being made this must be reported to Social Services.**

5:6 Reports may be needed for Child Protection Case conferences or the criminal/civil courts.

Consequently, records and reports should be:

- 5.6.1 factual (no opinions);
- 5.6.2 non-judgemental (no assumptions);
- 5.6.3 clear;
- 5.6.4 accurate;
- 5.6.5 dated and signed.

## 6.0 Recruitment & Appointments

6:1 The School's selection and recruitment policy includes all appropriate checks on staff and suitability including Criminal Records Bureau checks.

## 7.0 Attending Meetings & Conferences

7.1 Attending case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributing to the Framework for Assessments process, and providing a report which has been shared with the parents is the responsibility of the child-protection teacher.

## 8.0 Confidentiality

- 8.1 The School recognises that all matters relating to pupil protection are confidential.
- 8.2 The Headteacher and the child-protection teacher will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.
- 8.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard pupils.
- 8.4 The School will always undertake to share its intention to refer a pupil to Social Care with their parents and carers unless to do so could put that pupil at greater harm.

## 9.0 Supporting Staff

- 9.1 The School recognises that staff working in the School who have become involved with a pupil who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 9.2 The School will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support. This could be provided by the Headteacher, occupational health, and the teacher helpline.
- 9.3 It is understood that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The document '**Guidance on Safe Practices for Education Staff**' provides advice.

## **10.0 Allegations Against Staff**

- 10.1 All school staff should take care not to place themselves in vulnerable positions with pupils. It is always advisable that interviews or work with individual pupils or parents are to be conducted in the view of other adults.
- 10.2 All staff should be aware of the School behaviour policy.
- 10.3 The School understands that a pupil may make an allegation about a member of staff.
- 10.3.1 If such an allegation is made the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately discuss the content with the Headteacher, or the most senior teacher available, who will decide on the appropriate action.
- 10.3.2 The Headteacher or senior teacher may take advice from Education Personnel or the EWO at the Town Hall.
- 10.3.3 If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will contact Education Personnel. If the Headteacher is unaware of the allegation s/he will be notified by the Chair of Governors at this time.
- 10.3.4 The school will follow LA procedures for managing allegations against staff.

**END OF TEXT**

## **APPENDIX A**

(Information for parents/carers)

Information for parents/carers is published in the School prospectus as follows:

“The School is committed to promoting the health and welfare of all pupils and if staff see signs which suggest that one of the pupils may have been the victim of abuse (or is at risk of abuse) staff will follow the procedures laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee. **N.B.** Such action in no way infers that any parent/carer or other individual is being accused of wrongdoing. A full version of the School’s Child Protection policy is available on request.”

## Appendix B

### TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND THEIR SYMPTOMS

Child-abuse can be categorised into four distinct types, i.e.

1. **Physical Abuse;**
2. **Sexual Abuse;**
3. **Emotional Abuse;**
4. **Physical Neglect;**
5. **Grave Concern/at risk** — this is not a distinct category but is dealt with separately. A pupil can be at risk from any combination of the four categories.

These different types of abuse require different approaches. A pupil suffering from physical abuse may be in immediate and serious danger. Action should, therefore, be taken immediately. With other forms of abuse there is a need to ensure that adequate information is gathered. There is also a need to make sure that grounds for suspicion have been adequately investigated and recorded. The need to collate information must be balanced against the need for urgent action. If there are reasonable grounds for suspicion then a decision to monitor the situation should be taken only after consultation. A situation that should cause particular concern is that of a pupil who fails to thrive without any obvious reason. In such a situation a medical investigation will be required to consider the causes. Each of the five categories will now be explored in more detail.

#### **B1. Physical Abuse:**

B1.1 This involves physical injury to a pupil, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

- B1.1.1 bruises and abrasions** - especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the pupil. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the pupil's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
- B1.1.2 slap marks** - these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
- B1.1.3 twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks** - can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a pupil eat or to stop a pupil from speaking.
- B1.1.4 bruising on both sides of the ear** - this is often caused by grabbing a pupil who is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- B1.1.5 grip marks on arms or trunk** - gripping bruises on an arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a pupil. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to diagnose the effects of shaking full. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.
- B1.1.6 black eyes** – are most commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. **NB.** A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye, but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- B1.1.7 damage to the mouth** – e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- B1.1.8 bite marks**
- B1.1.9 fractures**
- B1.1.10 poisoning or other misuse of drugs** – e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- B1.1.11 burns and/or scalds** – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. Some types of scalds known as ‘dipping scalds’ are always cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a pupil accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a pupil who has been deliberately ‘dipped’ in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

## **B2 Sexual Abuse:**

This implies the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature pupils and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

B2.1 Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- B2.1.1 a detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the pupil;
- B2.1.2 behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other pupils or adults;
- B2.1.3 attempts to inform by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often beginning by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such pupils that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- B2.1.4 a fear of medical examinations;
- B2.1.5 a fear of being alone — this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-suffers, etc.;
- B2.1.6 a sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa;
- B2.1.7 excessive masturbation is especially worrying when it takes place in public;
- B2.1.8 promiscuity;
- B2.1.9 sexual approaches or assaults - on other pupils or adults;
- B2.1.10 urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted diseases (STD) are all cause for immediate concern in young pupils, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified.
- B2.1.11 bruising to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas; Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a pupil has been held so that sexual abuse can take place.
- B2.1.12 discomfort or pain particularly in the genital or anal areas;
- B2.1.13 the drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

## **B3 Emotional Abuse:**

This is the severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a pupil caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment - this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

## **B4 Physical Neglect:**

This implies the persistent or severe neglect of a pupil (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the pupil's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent stomach aches, feeling unwell, and apparent anorexia can be associated with Physical neglect.

B4.1 Typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

- B4.1.1 **Underweight** - a pupil may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight pupil gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some pupils also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- B4.1.2 **Inadequately clad** - a distinction needs to be made between situations where pupils are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the pupil from thriving.

**Physical Neglect** is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal, but it may be appropriate to invoke child-protection procedures in the case of neglect where the pupil's development is being adversely affected.

## **B5. Grave Concern/at risk:**

This is not a separate category of child-abuse as such, but covers a number of situations where a pupil may be at risk, e.g. pupils whose situations do not currently fit the above categories, but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of abuse. Grave concern may be felt where a pupil shows symptoms of stress and distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:

- B5.1 there is a known child-abuser in the family;
- B5.2 another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- B5.3 the parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree;
- B5.4 there is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour;
- B5.5 the pupil is exposed to potential risk or exploitation *via* the Internet e.g. pornographic material or chat-rooms.

## **B6. The Symptoms of Stress and Distress:**

When a pupil is suffering from any one or more of the previous four 'categories of abuse', or if the pupil is 'at risk', he/she will nearly always suffer from or display signs of stress and distress.

An abused pupil is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:

- B6.1 a lack of concentration and a fall-off in School performance;
- B6.2 aggressive or hostile behaviour;
- B6.3 moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences;
- B6.4 difficulties in relationships with peers;
- B6.5 regression to more immature forms of behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking;
- B6.6 self harming or suicidal behaviour;
- B6.7 low self esteem;
- B6.8 wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy - pupils who persistently run away from home may be escaping from sexual physical abuse;
- B6.9 disturbed sleep;
- B6.10 general personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention-seeking behaviour;
- B6.11 a sudden change in School performance.

## **B7.0 Parental Signs of Child Abuse:**

- B7.1 Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:
  - B7.1.1 implausible explanations for injuries;
  - B7.1.2 unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries;
  - B7.1.3 injured pupil kept away from School until injuries have healed without adequate reason;
  - B7.1.4 a high level of expressed hostility to the pupil;
  - B7.1.5 grossly unrealistic assumptions about child-development;
  - B7.1.6 general dislike of child-like behaviour;
  - B7.1.7 inappropriate labelling of pupil's behaviour as bad or naughty;
  - B7.1.8 leaving pupils unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.