



**ASHTON HOUSE
SCHOOL**

**Policy for
Child Protection**

SECTION 1: SETTING THE SCENE

Abuse of children can initially be spotted by parents, nursery nurses, youth workers, teachers, lecturers, peripatetic teachers, governors, volunteer helpers, lunchtime supervisors, Educational Psychologists, Educational Welfare Officers, non teaching staff, etc. The purpose of this policy is to inform those who work closely with children and their families as to the most common signs of child abuse and to prescribe the procedures that must be followed to protect the child.

Child abuse manifests itself in a wide variety of ways, e.g. physical, emotional, sexual, severe neglect and as a result of domestic violence. Abuse of all kinds occurs right across the social spectrum. Child sexual abuse in particular has been shown to occur in families at all levels of socio-economic status and in families with high overt degrees of conformity to codes of sexual respectability.

Although the signs of child abuse are well documented many of the symptoms taken in isolation can occur in situations where no child abuse is occurring, will occur or has ever occurred. Many of these signs may also be indications of other medical, social or psychological problems or simply normal child development. Staff therefore need to be careful and thoughtful in ascertaining whether abuse is suspected. The large number of signs and symptoms described in this policy need to be considered in the light of normal child development, e.g.

- temper tantrums are to be expected from a two year old but may be a sign of serious distress in a child of 10;
- an interest in sexual topics and members of the opposite sex is to be expected in a youngster of 15, but in a 7 year old, such behaviour may well be a cause for concern.

Considering that child protection procedures apply to all children below the age of 18, the Headteacher/designated Senior Management and staff must decide if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that child abuse is taking place. If they have reasonable grounds then they must act immediately. It is safer to act or to discuss with other agencies than to delay.

Many agencies and support services are able to help identify and assess pupils' needs and to provide support for those pupils. Co-operation between the School, the LEA, the health services, police, social services and other agencies is vital for the most effective assessment, intervention and deployment of resources for children to be secured. Indeed, there are clear statutory duties on these agencies to co-operate.

Such agencies and support services include a wide variety of specialist teachers and other professionals. Immediate contact and close liaison between agencies such as the Social Services Department, Local Constabulary, Local Health Authority and NSPCC is essential in cases of child abuse. All agencies must understand that in child protection cases they are not only required to carry out their own agency functions, but are also making a vital contribution to advising and assisting the local authority to discharge its statutory child protection/child care duties.

Each establishment must have a 'Designated Senior Member of Staff' who is responsible for Child Protection issues – this will normally be the Headteacher/Principal in a school, Principal/Head of Centre in F.E. or Youth Service. For clarity the term Headteacher/Designated SM (Senior Manager) will be used throughout the rest of this policy when deemed appropriate. The Headteacher/Designated SM should ensure that all staff (teaching and support staff) are familiar with the contents of this Child Protection Policy, and that all staff sign a record to confirm that they have received and read the document. The signed record must be updated termly so as to include all new staff. This Child Protection

Policy and the integral process of notification forms an important part of the induction programme for all staff. **In our Early Years department (EYFS) the teacher in charge will have the responsibility for safeguarding children within this environment and will undergo the necessary training. She will liaise with the Headteacher/Designated SM (Senior Manager) and local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.**

Recent legislation regarding the identification of convicted 'child sex offenders' states that their residence address and identity will be released to Headteachers on a 'need to know' basis. If a Headteacher is informed that a 'child sex offender' is in the locality of the School, it is not for the Headteacher to decide upon whether or not parents can be informed – this is the decision of the police. In the situation where a Headteacher is aware that a 'child sex offender' is in the vicinity of the School, but no authorisation has been given to inform parents, then that Headteacher may be well advised to make 'awareness of strangers' and 'personal safety' a high profile topic in:

- the current assembly programme;
- the current PSHE scheme of work.

SECTION 2: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims:

1. The School aims to provide pupils with relevant information, skills and attitudes to help them to resist abuse and prepare for the responsibilities of adult life including home and family. Together with these skills we hope that pupils will feel confident they can confide in staff on issues of neglect, abuse and deprivation.
2. To allow staff to be familiar and confident with the appropriate child protection procedures and issues. This policy is intended to give clear guidance to all staff, teaching and non-teaching on:
 - i. the signs that may indicate the possibility of abuse;
 - ii. the procedures to follow if a child discloses abuse or a member of staff suspects abuse.
3. To work with parents to build an understanding of the School's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
4. To monitor children who have been identified as 'at risk'.
5. To contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies and schools - thereby contributing towards a more effective detection of the incidence of child abuse.
6. To review the School procedures and improve the way child protection issues are managed.

Objectives:

These objectives relate directly to the six aims of this Child Protection Policy at Ashton House School and are intended to show how the aims are actually put into practice.

1.
 - i. The skills will be delivered through the Curriculum and especially through PSHE.
 - ii. We try to create an environment and ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and they are listened to.
 - iii. We provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
 - iv. We use the Curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
 - v. Staff treat the children with respect and all pupils are expected to treat each other and staff with respect.
 - vi. We look carefully at the role models the School offers pupils through staffing, materials used, selection of curricular content and other experiences.
 - vii. We try to impress upon pupils the importance of rejecting violence as a means of resolving conflict.
 - viii. We regularly review and evaluate our school policies and practices of social control and behaviour modification.
 - ix. We give pupils opportunities to understand and strategies for coping with stress.
 - x. We give all pupils the opportunities to learn about child development and good parenting.
 - xi. We include, in the Curriculum/PSHE programmes information on personal safety.
2.
 - i. We provide appropriate child protection training **every three years to school staff** and in particular to **designated teachers who must train every two years** to ensure that their skills and expertise are up to date. Training focuses on the recognition of the symptoms of child abuse, the procedures and case studies. All staff undergo some initial training in child protection during the induction programme for new teachers and support staff.
 - ii. Each member of staff is given a complete copy of this policy in their staff handbook, and a copy of the Department of Health booklet 'What to do if You're Worried A Child is Being Abused'.
 - iii. Each teacher must sign a specific register to indicate that they have read the policy in its entirety and that they accept their duty:
 - to be familiar with this policy;
 - to implement this policy and to co-operate with the School management in promoting 'Child Protection'.
3.
 - i. We involve parents and other professionals in the community in the personal safety programme.

- ii. We inform parents/carers (by publishing a statement in the School prospectus and in the first termly newsletter) that the staff are required by law to follow the procedures laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee. The statement reads 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, staff will (as is required by law) 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 upon request."
- 4. We keep records in a secure location, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences.
- 5.
 - i. We employ the child protection procedures and systems of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in Hounslow.
 - ii. We employ systems that enable the transition process to include child protection procedures.
- 6. A case review is conducted annually.

SECTION 3: TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND THEIR SYMPTOMS

Child abuse can be categorised into four main and distinct categories, i.e.

- 1. Physical Abuse.**
- 2. Sexual Abuse.**
- 3. Emotional Abuse.**
- 4. Physical Neglect.**

These four categories are those used by the CPS and Police in pursuing any cases of child abuse. A child can be at risk from any combination of the four categories. However, for those working in the field two other categories of abuse will be of significance, i.e.

- 5. Domestic Violence.**
- 6. Grave Concern/at risk.**

These different types of abuse require different approaches. A child 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 only be taken after consultation. A situation that should cause particular concern is that of a child 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.

1. **Physical Abuse:**

This involves physical injury to a child, 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:

- **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 child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
- **slap marks** – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
- **twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks** - can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking.
- **bruising on both sides of the ear** – this is often caused by grabbing a child that 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.
- **grip marks on arms or trunk** - found in babies who are handled roughly or held down in a violent way. Gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. 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 fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.
- **black eyes** - are most commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. N.B. 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.
- **damage to the mouth** - e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- **bite marks.**
- **fractures** - in children less than 2 years.
- **poisoning and other misuse of drugs** - e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- **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 child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately 'dipped' in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

2. **Sexual Abuse:**

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children 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. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- a **detailed sexual knowledge** inappropriate to the age of the child.
- **behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual** towards other children or adults.
- **attempts to inform** by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- a **fear of medical examinations.**

- a **fear of being alone** – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters, etc.
- a **sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.**
- **excessive masturbation** is especially worrying when it takes place in public.
- **promiscuity.**
- **unusually explicit or detailed sex play** in young children.
- **sexual approaches or assaults** - on other children or adults.
- **pregnancy, urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted disease (STD)** are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified.
- **bruising** to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place.
- **discomfort or pain** particularly in the genital or anal areas.
- the drawing of **pornographic or sexually explicit images.**

3. **Emotional Abuse:**

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child 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.

4. **Physical Neglect:**

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

- **Underweight** – a child 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 child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- **Inadequately clad** - a distinction needs to be made between situations where children 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 child 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 child's development is being adversely affected.

5. **Domestic Violence**

This is not a separate category of child abuse as such, and should be treated as physical or emotional abuse as appropriate. Children in violent homes are up to nine times more likely to be injured and abused, either directly or through trying to protect their parent.

A child may be witness to violence that results in behavioural problems, absenteeism(staying at home to protect a parent), ill health, bullying, anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol abuse or self-harm.

Teachers need to be made aware of the need to support vulnerable children who have moved schools as a result of a parent fleeing from domestic violence, and those who may be attending from a refuge environment.

6. Grave Concern/at risk:

This is not a separate category of child abuse as such but covers a number of situations where a child may be at risk - children 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 child shows symptoms of stress and distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:

- there is a known child abuser in the family;
- another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- the parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree;
- there is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour.

The Symptoms of Stress and Distress:

When a child is suffering from any one or more of the previous four 'categories of abuse', or if that child is 'at risk', he/she will nearly always suffer from/display signs of stress and distress. An abused child is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:

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

Parental Signs of Child Abuse:

Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:

- implausible explanations of injuries;
- unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries;
- injured child kept away from school until injuries have healed without adequate reason;
- a high level of expressed hostility to the child;
- grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development;
- general dislike of child-like behaviour;
- inappropriate labelling of child's behaviour as bad or naughty;
- leaving children unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.

SECTION 4: THE ROLES OF DIFFERENT STAFF AND AGENCIES

N.B. for a full description of the role of various agencies involved in Child Protection procedures see the Hounslow LSCB procedure for child protection.

1. The LEA

LEAs have responsibilities to manage child protection issues across their region. In particular they must provide:

- Strategic planning and co-ordinate the delivery of service, through the allocation of resources and by working with other agencies including Social Services, health care professionals, youth offending teams, police and the local safeguarding children board (LSCB).
- Support and ensure that all maintained schools are aware of their responsibilities through providing training, guidance and support.
- Protection for all children who are not in a normal school setting, i.e. Pupil Referral Units, excluded pupils and those being educated at home through a tutoring system.
- An identified senior officer for child protection to manage all provision and services, including the support for Headteachers/teachers in cases of alleged abuse.
- Resources to support Child Protection and the work of the LSCB and to ensure that schools can discharge their responsibilities to keep children safe.
- A senior officer to represent the LEA on the LSCB and makes an effective contribution to co-ordinate services for children.
- Support to ensure the inter-agency partnership is working and evaluate practice and take action to remedy any problems.
- Provide training for all new LEA staff, designated teachers and Governors, who work with children to ensure their knowledge and skills are kept up-to-date.
- Provide model policies and procedures for schools and ensure that school policies comply with LSCB guidelines.

2. The Partners

The Partners are accountable for ensuring the School has effective policies and procedures in place and for monitoring compliance with LSCB guidelines - Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 introduced this new duty on Governing Bodies/Partners and became statutory in June 2004. The Partners, however, do not have the right to know details of cases except in exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff.

The Partners should:

- Nominate one partner (the Principal) to have responsibility for aspects of child protection in the school, to liaise with the Headteacher and provide information and reports (in conjunction with the Designated Teacher) to the Partners.
- Make arrangements for the Principal to lead in dealing with any allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- Undertake training about child protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information to discharge their duties and understand their responsibilities.
- Ensure the School has a child protection policy in place in accordance with local inter-agency child protection procedures.
- Ensure the policy is available to parents.

- Operate safe recruitment procedures and ensure appropriate checks (including Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and List 99 or current equivalent) are carried out on all new members of the Governing Body, as well as all new members of staff.
- Have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, and these comply with inter-agency guidelines.
- Ensure a member of the SLT is designated to take the lead in child protection issues, who can provide advice, support and training for staff, liaise with LEA and all inter-agency personnel.
- **Undertake an annual review of policies and procedures** and remedy any deficiencies that come to light.

(Governing Bodies of Further Educational Institutions and Proprietors of Independent Schools have statutory responsibilities for pupils who are under 18 years old only. Procedures are similar to the above, except LEAs do not have to provide advice and support and can charge for these services. Boarding Schools will be aware of inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection under the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards Inspection Regulations. These are published by the Secretary of State under Section 87 C (1) of the Children Act 1989, and amended by the Care Standards Act 2000. Standard 3 specifies what must be in place for child protection and allegations of abuse).

Extended School and Before and After School Activities are covered by the Governing Body of the School except where premises are hired out and a trust deed allows another person to control the use of the premises, thus allowing school premises to be used by the wider community.

3. The Headteacher/Designated SM:

The Headteacher/Designated SM is the person responsible for contacting the social services to register concern about a child's welfare and implementing procedures relating to child protection. He/she must therefore:

- implement the policies and procedures adopted by the Partners;
- ensure sufficient time and resources are allocated to the Designated Person to discharge their duties, including taking part in inter-agency strategy meetings and contributing to the assessment of pupils;
- be fully conversant with LSCB procedures; (Local Safeguarding Children's Board)
- consult and refer cases to Education Welfare Section of LEA emphasising that the referral is under LSCB Child Protection procedures;
- organise training on Child Protection within the School;
- ensure that all staff know about and have access to LSCB;
- attend LEA training;
- keep the Headteacher informed if appropriate
- be aware of the role of other agencies;
- ensure representation/reports to Child Protection Conferences and keep appropriate records;
- support staff;
- ensure children on Child Protection Register are known and that protection plans are followed and feedback given;
- advise the Headteacher about curriculum issues;

- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and implementation of the School's Child Protection Policy.
- ensure arrangements are in place for pupils in work placements and/or who are being educated off-site on a regular basis.

If the Headteacher/Designated SM is absent for any reason it must be made clear to all staff which Deputy is in charge and therefore acting as the Designated Member of Staff.

- a) The Head/designated senior member of staff in collaboration with individual staff must complete the report form within 24 hours of a referral, detailing signs observed, action taken and outcomes of contact with other agencies, and send it as soon as possible to:
 - i) Access and Welfare Section, County Hall;
 - ii) Social Services Department (appropriate Division).
- b) The Head/designated member of staff should be available in the holidays to produce an educational report to contribute to case conferences.
- c) The Head/designated senior member of staff and or individual members of staff must be prepared to attend a case conference (usually called by Social Services Department) at very short notice, even if it proves to be inconvenient.
- d) The Head/designated senior member of staff should inform the initiating member of staff about what action has been taken.

The Headteacher/Designated SM must prepare reports for, and be prepared to attend a case conference that is scheduled to be held during a school holiday. If he/she cannot attend for some reason then the Deputy acting as the Designated SM should attend.

If a child is moving to a new school then the Headteacher/Designated SM must pass any on-going concerns to the Headteacher/Designated SM of the new school, and inform/involve the Keyworker and Register Custodian as appropriate. If a child is currently on the register and is moving to a new school, then the Headteacher/Designated SM must forward all records to the Headteacher/Designated SM of the new school and inform/involve the Keyworker and Register Custodian as appropriate.

If the child moves to a new address then the Keyworker and Register Custodian must be informed/involved as appropriate. If the child's new address is unknown, the Headteacher must forward any information which he/she has which might prove helpful in tracing a child.

The Headteacher/Designated SM must ensure that in his/her absence any Deputy who is to act as the Designated Member of Staff knows the procedure to be followed in the case of suspected child abuse (see later) and the names of any Keyworkers. The Headteacher/Designated SM has a professional duty to enquire about the progress of individual cases in which they are/have been involved.

4. The Access and Welfare Department/ Child Protection Team:

The Access and Welfare Department at County Hall deals with issues of attendance, admissions/allocations, child employment, child protection, child abuse, exclusions, etc.

5. School Staff (Teaching):

Abuse of children in attendance at school is most likely to be first noticed by teaching staff and/or educational welfare officers. Teachers bring a number of particular advantages to the recognition of child abuse, i.e.

- they have regular and frequent opportunities to observe children, including opportunities to observe changes in their behaviour.
- they have an ongoing relationship with children, who may confide in them about difficulties that they are experiencing.
- they have knowledge of the wide range of behaviour likely to be seen in children of a particular age.
- they have opportunities to observe the response of a group of children to particular situations. They will, therefore, be sensitive to surprising or unusual responses.

These opportunities to see children in context give a particular value to the observations of teachers. Their insights need to be complemented by the skills of other relevant disciplines, especially those of social workers and medical practitioners. A teacher may become concerned when a child tells the teacher about events that have happened to them or to a friend, brother, sister or when another adult claims to be aware of abuse. Teachers value their relationships with parents/guardians and in many situations will share their initial concerns about a child with the parents/guardians. However, **in many cases the parents/guardians may be the abusers and so teachers should be prepared to share their concerns with other professionals at an early stage without necessarily informing parents of the action they propose to take.** Teachers have a professional duty to:

- observe and be alert to signs of abuse;
- take immediate action in the child's best interest by reporting any suspicion or evidence of abuse or non-accidental injury;
- know the role of the Designated Person and the School and LSCB procedures;
- enquire about the progress of individual cases in which they are/have been involved.

All teaching staff must understand the importance of reporting suspicious circumstances and be able to report signs of abuse to the Headteacher/Designated SM. Beyond the initial reporting of suspected child abuse, staff have a clearly restricted role as further judgements and action decisions are the responsibility of other agencies with statutory powers to help the child.

6. School Staff (Non-Teaching):

As with teaching staff, non-teaching staff have a responsibility to observe and report any suspicion or evidence of abuse or non-accidental injury. All non-teaching staff must understand the importance of reporting suspicious circumstances and be able to report signs of abuse to the Headteacher/Designated SM. Beyond the initial reporting of suspected child abuse, non-teaching staff have a clearly restricted role as further judgements and action decisions are the responsibility of other agencies with statutory powers to help the child.

7. The Keyworker:

Every child placed on the Child Protection Register has a named Keyworker, who is either a member of the Social Services Department or the NSPCC. It is the Keyworker's responsibility to co-ordinate inter-agency activity. Staff in educational establishments can make a vital contribution in advising and assisting the Keyworker, and have a duty to co-operate fully with the Keyworker in providing information, preparing assessments, implementing plans and in supporting the child as appropriate. This may involve liaising with other agencies during school holidays.

SECTION 5 CASE CONFERENCES

A case conference is called when there has been a Child Protection Investigation. It is not a forum for a formal decision that a person has abused a child, but it should identify those adults who present, or are thought to present, risks to the child – it is the courts who decide the guilt of a person on child abuse charges. Although case conferences are normally covered by the Social Services Department, other agencies, including education department staff, may request a case conference. Participation may be limited to those who have a need to know or a contribution to make, and this will always include staff in schools, centres and colleges. Where staff at the School are involved with a child, they may contribute to the initial assessment under Section 17 or Section 47 of the enquiry. A report should be prepared and sent to the conference 48 hours prior to the event and copies taken to share with other professionals. Even if alleged abuse had not been identified in the School, the Head should automatically be invited to attend the initial case conference as he/she will undoubtedly have invaluable information to contribute. In order to protect the child a Child Protection Plan is drawn up and the child is placed on the Child Protection Register – this is maintained by Social Services on behalf of the LSCB.

Staff in educational establishments may need to be aware of any recommendations made at the case conference and in Child Protection Plan in order to ensure continuing care for the child. It may be necessary to attend case conferences held in school holidays, and the Headteacher/Designated SM will need to make arrangements as appropriate. Designated Staff in different agencies will be notified if there is an intention to remove a child from the Register and there is a right to object to such de-registration.

At the end of the initial conference, if the child is placed on the child protection register, a ‘core group’ will be formed, made up of a group of individuals responsible for developing the child protection plan and using it as a detailed working tool. Membership of the core group will comprise the Key Worker, the child, if appropriate, family members and professionals who have direct contact with the family. The Designated Headteacher/SM will be a member for a child present in the School. All members are jointly responsible for changing the child protection plan as need arises and for implementing it. The first meeting of the core group must take place within 10 working days of the Initial Child Protection Conference and meet regularly (at least every six weeks) after that, to monitor changes and alter the child protection plan accordingly.

SECTION 6 RECORDS

All records about child protection, including case conference records are confidential and schools/colleges must ensure the safekeeping of such records and of other documents for individual cases and the eventual secure destruction of such records. Information given at case conferences must not be disclosed without the prior permission of the person who originally supplied the information. Statute exempts any information relating to actual, alleged or suspected child abuse from the requirements of disclosure to those with Parental Responsibility. When a pupil transfers school all relevant concerns and/or records must be forwarded on – for further details see Section 3.1 (the role of the Headteacher/Designated SM).

All staff are required to record accurately information that may be required in respect of child protection. If a child discloses, record the precise information as soon as

possible, with date, event, action taken, and sign and date the record. It is very important for staff to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. All staff records must be passed to the Headteacher/Designated SM for storage and action.

Records should not be kept in the child's normal record file but in a separate secure place.

In cases of alleged child abuse which come to court, child protection records may be required by the court. Information required by the court should be given to the officers of the court and not to other persons who may use it as evidence. It is not necessary for other background information on the child to be released and can only be done with parental permission.

When a child dies the LEA may carry out a Section 8 Review under the Children Act 1989. This is a multi-agency investigation and a report on behalf of the Education Department is usually compiled by the Principal Education Officer – Child Protection. All school records must be kept in these circumstances - only copies can be given to parents.

In all cases which involve the death of or serious harm to a child when abuse is confirmed or suspected, the LSCB will require a swift response to requests for information from all agencies including educational establishments. Records must be made available to the Case Review Committee - this further emphasises the need for precise and secure keeping of records in educational establishments. In addition, interviews within the Education Department involving key personnel may be required, in order to assess the quality of decisions made and actions taken. The Designated Headteacher/SM is responsible for updating and monitoring of records and ensure their confidentiality.

SECTION 7 REPORTING PROCEDURE

A member of staff only requires reasonable cause for concern regarding potential child abuse in order to act. Arriving at the point where information and its interpretation give reasonable cause for concern depends upon the source of information. **If the information comes from the child then the teacher should act immediately by taking them to find the Headteacher/Designated SM. N.B. One sentence from the child indicating child abuse or non-accidental injury provides you with 'reasonable grounds' and is sufficient for you to act.** This may also apply if clear information comes from a sibling or other adult, etc. However, considering that many of the signs of child abuse are also commonly associated with other medical, social or psychological problems or simply normal child development a teacher may naturally discuss some initial concerns about a child's mental or physical well-being with other staff, parents, etc. However, in many cases the parents/guardians may be the abusers and explanations or comments made by the parents may be sufficient to give the teacher reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury. **Once there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury, teachers must not contact the parents any further.** When there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury then the following procedure must be implemented immediately:

1. **Make a written report to the Headteacher/Designated SM immediately.** When a child has reported what amounts to suspected child abuse or non-accidental injury, then they should be taken to the Headteacher/Designated SM even before the written report is made.

Staff must:

- Remember that the priority is to protect the child.
- Treat the matter seriously.
- Receive the child's story if appropriate, listen but do not judge.
- React to what the child tells you with belief and tell the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Indicate to the child what action you will take and make it clear that you will have to inform others (no secrets). Only inform those with a need to know.
- Keep an accurate record of what you have become aware of and what you have done.
- Limit any questioning bearing in mind the '**must not**' points below.

Staff must not:

- Contact the parents again – this is the job of social services.
- Interrogate the child if that child has disclosed information, or ask leading questions.
- Speak to anyone about whom allegations are made (including colleagues).
- Promise to keep secrets/confidentiality.
- Ask a child outright if they or others have suffered abuse.

The teacher may now withdraw from the immediate process but should remain vigilant.

2. The Headteacher/Designated SM must now seek advice from the Register Custodian. If the time is within normal office working hours the Headteacher/Designated SM must contact the Register Custodian and Social Services. If the time is outside normal office working hours then the Headteacher/Designated SM must contact the Emergency Duty Team of the Social Services.
3. If it is necessary for the child to be taken to hospital, then hand the child over to the direct care of medical staff informing them that non-accidental injury is suspected. A member of staff must stay with the child (whether the child has been taken to hospital or not) until the social worker arrives as in Stage 5.
4. A social worker will arrive either at the School or the Hospital as is appropriate. The Headteacher/Designated SM in collaboration with staff involved in the case must complete a report form, detailing signs observed, action taken and outcomes of contact with other agencies, and send it as soon as possible to:
 - i) the appropriate department at the LEA, e.g. Access and Welfare Section;
 - ii) Social Services (appropriate Division).

If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived then the member of staff must remember that he/she has no right to prevent contact between the parents/guardians and the child or to prevent the removal of the child by the parents/guardians. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the Police should be immediately contacted and fully informed.
5. The social worker(s) will decide on what action to take and it is the Social Services who must contact the parents/guardians. The Head/Designated SM should inform the member of staff who first reported the concern as to what action has been taken.

Once a strategy for procuring support has been agreed all parties should be kept well informed of developments as appropriate. The following procedures need not necessarily imply that further action is inevitable. It is important, however, in cases of serious concern that there is communication between schools, the Register Custodian, and the Social Services Department.

6. If staff are still concerned about the child after Social Services have taken action steps or even after a case conference has occurred then they must ask the Headteacher/Designated SM to inform the Keyworker, and if necessary request that the case conference be reconvened. If it is felt that the Keyworker has not taken appropriate action then the Register Custodian should be contacted for advice. Unfortunately some instances of abuse recur and staff should remain vigilant.

YOUR DESIGNATED TEACHER IS:**Mrs Mary Grundberg.**
YOUR LOCAL CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER IS: ...**Ms Lyn Wilson**
TELEPHONE NO:**0208 583 2785**

N.B. If suspicions concern the conduct of a member of staff then the Principal must report directly to the **Head of Safeguarding Children, Sally Phillips (0208 583 3061)**

It is important that at all stages in the above procedure staff make detailed written records of all their reports and actions. Before forwarding reports on for further action to take place, it is recommended that staff make and securely retain copies of any notes or reports that they forward. N.B. Notes should be made of the relevant parts of conversations and phone calls, e.g. their general content and 'Who is to do what?' – the notes should be included in reports.

Once you have passed the child into the system, withdraw from the process. It is not appropriate to talk to the child or to offer further support. However, when a pupil has trusted you enough to disclose, they may feel the desire to return to talk (remember that investigations can sometimes take months). In such a situation tell them that you cannot comment or advise as to do so may affect their security and safety both in the short and long term - however you can listen! Any 'discussion' could be misused in court by defence lawyers as evidence against the teacher and the child.

Allegations against school staff:

Teachers must protect themselves and staff should bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. Teachers should ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil. Eg. In one to one tuition, sports coaching, conveying pupils by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil etc. It is important not to touch pupils however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent. When pupils make such an allegation against a member of staff, LSCB procedures must be followed. This involves the following procedure:

- Ensure the safety of the child.
- Contact the Headteacher/SM immediately.
- If the allegation is made against the Headteacher, the Designated SM or Deputy Head should contact the Principal immediately.
- Telephone the Education Officer – Child Protection who will immediately notify Social Services / Police and Education personnel who may advise suspension from duty while an investigation takes place.

- Three investigations may then be carried out simultaneously; an inter-agency child protection investigation, police investigation and an employer's investigation.

In the case of suspected or identified abuse of a child by a Headteacher, the police and/or Social Services have a duty to investigate. National guidelines have been produced and the first person to receive an allegation regarding a Headteacher should take it directly to the Designated SM (if this is not the Headteacher) or the Deputy Headteacher and through them to the Principal. At this stage, after hearing a child's allegation, no discussion should be initiated by school staff with the Headteacher.

Any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children, will be reported to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) at PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (tel. 0300 123 1111), within one month of leaving the school. In this context, ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. **It is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence and the school may be removed from the DCSF register of independent schools.** The relevant legislation is contained in The Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003.

SECTION 8 ADVICE, ANSWERING QUESTIONS & CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff often become initially aware of the possibility of abuse occurring when they are asked for advice/questioned by children in a confidential manner. Having considered current statutes relating to a teacher's professional responsibilities, and a desire to protect staff, the Partners have issued the following statement/directive. N.B. Failure of staff to adhere to this statement may constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Offering Advice:

The Partners believe that the School's function is to provide a general education about health, personal and social matters and **not** to offer individual advice, information or counselling. However staff may identify sources of professional information and advice when appropriate. If the offering of outside expert advice is not taken up, then a teacher may only give such advice after receiving written permission from the Headteacher and the parents/guardians - clearly this would not be done if the pupil did not wish it. Advice does not legally require consent but the following procedure protects the teacher and the pupil, and acknowledges that teachers may not be qualified to give the required advice.

If a pupil asks a teacher for advice on sexual matters, the teacher must not trespass on the parents' rights and responsibilities. Therefore, the teacher should encourage the pupil to seek advice from his or her parents and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional.

Teachers cannot:

- give personal advice or counselling on sexual matters (including contraception and abortion) to a pupil (either individually or within a group) if a parent has withdrawn that pupil from sex education;
- give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16 (for whom sexual intercourse is illegal) without parental consent.

Teachers can:

- provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential advice and treatment, e.g. school nurse, their GP or Brook Advisory Centre.

Explicit Questions:

It is unlikely to be appropriate to deal with a pupil's explicit questions by dealing with it in front of the whole class. In practice this means that teachers have to say 'I'm sorry but the School Policy and legislation does not allow me to answer that question'. The teacher may deem it appropriate to discuss the child's concerns with the parents - a decision may then be taken on how best to deal with it. Answers to the 'questions in a box' approach must only be given after very careful screening of the questions. In all cases of explicit questions being asked by a child to a member of staff, abuse should only be suspected when the questions are totally inappropriate to the age of the child.

Confidentiality:

Having considered all available advice and guidance, the Governors and Headteacher state that in circumstances where a pupil is considered at some risk of any type of abuse (e.g. sexual or physical) or in breach of the law, the teacher must refer this immediately in writing to the Headteacher/Designated SM in compliance with the LEA procedures for Child Protection. The Headteacher/Designated SM will decide whether to inform the parents and/or appropriate authorities and may arrange for counselling as appropriate. Although there is no legal duty on a teacher, or a Headteacher/Designated SM, to inform parents of matters which a child has confided to them:

- teachers must not promise confidentiality even though they cannot be made to break it once given;
- pupils must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the Headteacher/Designated SM and possibly to parents;
- teachers must use their professional judgement and take into account the School's Child Protection policy to decide whether confidence can be maintained having heard the information;
- teachers must indicate clearly to pupils when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential - the pupil can then decide whether to proceed or not. When the content of the conversation indicates the possibility of child abuse, the teacher must pass that information onto the Headteacher/Designated SM in accordance with the School policy on Child Protection.

SECTION 9 EVALUATION OF CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Effective monitoring/evaluation of Child Protection issues is dependent upon the maintenance of accurate and up to date records. The criteria by which the monitoring and evaluation of the Child Protection procedures and policy are undertaken are described below:

PARENTS

1. any pertinent feedback from parents/guardians/carers;
2. regular updating of the information pack for parents in the annual policy review;
N.B. The School's annual report contains a report of the effectiveness of provision and any amendments made or proposed over the year to our Child Protection policy. Parents are encouraged to offer their views on Child Protection issues at the annual meeting for parents which is arranged by the Governing Body.

PUPILS

3. any pertinent feedback from pupils;
4. the number of pupils on the child protection register;
5. the number of referrals made by staff to the Headteacher/Designated SM;
6. the number of referrals made by the Headteacher/Designated SM to Social Services;
7. numbers of pupils on the register who pursue education after the age of 16;
8. routine examination by the Governors of anonymous individual case studies;

STAFF/INSET

9. involvement by all staff in INSET courses relating to Child Protection issues;
10. the amounts of the budget allocated to training for Child Protection issues;

PLANNING

11. reference to the aims of this policy when curricular planning occurs;
12. analysis and publication of Ofsted/HMI/LEA reports.

SECTION 10 COMPLIANCE

The policy is regularly updated in order that we comply with new legislation and good practice. Currently the School's policy for 'Child Protection' is consistent with, and so reinforces:

- the Education Act 2003 section 175 (Work Experience procedures);
- the Education Act 2002 section 175;
- the 'Child Protection' policy of the LEA;
- the Children Act 1989;
- Administrative Memorandum No. 76;
- the Education Act 1993;
- DfEE circulars 10/95 and 11/95 as related to child protection;
- the specific procedure for child protection as prescribed by the county Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC);
- the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child which contends that all children have an inalienable right to protection from harm and UK statute (Children Acts) which clearly state that the welfare of the child is of paramount consideration.

Compiled by: M Grundberg	Revision Number
Approved by: Angela Lark/Simon Turner	Revision Date January 2012

CHILD PROTECTION REPORT FORM

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NON ACCIDENTAL INJURY

Section 1 – Child's Details:

Date Of Report: ___ / ___ / ___
First Name(s) _____ Family Name _____
Gender (Please tick as is appropriate) Male? Female?
Date of Birth: ___ / ___ / ___ Current Age: _____ Years _____ Months
Previous School: _____ Transfer Date: _____
Has the child an SEN statement under the Education Act 1981? Yes? No?
Is the child 'disabled' under the Disabled Persons Act 1986? Yes? No?
Is the Educational Welfare Service (EWS) currently involved with the child? Yes? No?
Is the School Psychology Service (SPS) currently involved with the child? Yes? No?

Section 2 – School's Details:

Section 3 – Doctor's Details:

School Name: _____	Doctor's Name: _____
School Address: _____ _____	Doctor's Address: _____ _____
Post Code: _____ School Phone: _____	Post Code: _____ Doctor's Phone: _____

Section 4 – Parent/Guardian/Carer Details:

Parent/Guardian 1:	Relationship to Child:	Marital Status:	Occupation:
Home Address: _____ _____		Work Address: _____ _____	
Post Code: _____ Home Phone: _____		Post Code: _____ Work Phone: _____	
Parent/Guardian 2:	Relationship to Child:	Marital Status:	Occupation:
Home Address: _____ _____		Work Address: _____ _____	
Post Code: _____ Home Phone: _____		Post Code: _____ Work Phone: _____	

Section 5 – Sibling's Details:

Name: _____ School Address: _____ _____	Name: _____ School Address: _____ _____
Post Code: _____ School Phone: _____	Post Code: _____ School Phone: _____
Name: _____ School Address: _____ _____	Name: _____ School Address: _____ _____
Post Code: _____ School Phone: _____	Post Code: _____ School Phone: _____

CHILD PROTECTION REPORT FORM

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Section 6 – Reasons For Notification:

How was the suspected abuse first noticed?

When was the suspected abuse first noticed? _____

By whom was the suspected abuse first noticed? _____

What is the child's explanation of the suspected abuse?

Is there anything unusual in the child's appearance?

Is there anything unusual in the child's attitude?

Section 7 – Action Taken To Date:

Section 8 – Outcomes Of Actions & Contacts With Other Agencies To Date:

Section 9 – Other Useful Information:

Are Parents/Carer aware? _____

Have Parents/Carer been informed it would be reported? _____

Do Parents/Carer admit responsibility? _____

Are Parents/Carer likely to be at home? _____

Where is the child at the time of referral?

CHILD PROTECTION REPORT FORM
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL