

## **Child Protection Policy**

Peterborough High School fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 157 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Through their day to day contact with pupils and direct work with families staff at the school have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the appropriate agency, normally Children's Social Care.

This policy sets out how the school discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. The law covers all children under the age of eighteen years. Pupils who are 18 + may decide whether to report abuse to the Police but are still supported by the School.

### **There are four main elements to our policy:**

**PREVENTION** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole school protective ethos

**PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

**SUPPORT TO PUPILS** who may have been abused.

### **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school including governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

#### **1 PREVENTION**

- 1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.
- 1.2 The school will therefore:
  - 1.2.1 establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
  - 1.2.2 ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
  - 1.2.3 include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help;
  - 1.2.4 include, in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.

#### **2 PROCEDURES**

- 2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board " Safeguarding (Child Protection) Procedures", also known as the "Green Book". This includes procedures for the education service.

## **The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection**

The school will:

- 2.2.1 ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course, accredited by the Safeguarding Children Board. **The designated member of staff is the Headmaster who delegates the day-to-day responsibility for Child Protection management and procedures to Matron.** If both Matron and the Headmaster are absent, the Deputy Headmistress is responsible in the senior school and the Head of Preparatory Department in the Preparatory Department.
- 2.2.2 ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance
- 2.2.3 recognise the importance of the role of the designated teacher and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties
- 2.2.4 ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available
- 2.2.5 ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases.

## **The Role of Governors and School Staff**

The school will:

ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

the name of the designated person and her/his role

- 2.3.3 that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the Green Book

where the **Green Book** containing **Education Child Protection Procedures** is located.

**It can be found in Matron's Office.**

- 2.3.5 provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know
  - their personal responsibility,
  - the Green Book procedures,
  - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
  - how to support and to respond to a child who tells of abuse
- 2.3.6 ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies. Children's Social Care should be informed about allegations or suspicions of abuse immediately and certainly within 24 hours (in writing or with written confirmation of a telephone referral). They can be contacted via Matron or the Headmaster or directly on 01733 746460. Child protection investigations will then be carried out.

## **Liaison with Other Agencies**

The school will:

- 2.4.1 work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences;
- 2.4.2 notify Children's Social Care **immediately** if:
  - it should have to exclude a pupil who is subject of a child protection plan (whether fixed term or permanently)
  - there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject of a child protection plan i.e. on the first day of absence.

## **Record Keeping**

The school will:

- 2.5.1 keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer to Children's Social Care immediately;
- ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations

## **2.6 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- 2.6.1 Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. They should not talk generally in the staff room about child protection issues but should only speak to colleagues on a "need to know" basis. If in any doubts about confidentiality, staff should seek advice from a senior manager or outside agency as required.
- 2.6.2 The Headteacher or Designated Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 2.6.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

## **2.7 Communication with Parents**

The school will:

- 2.7.1 undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this. **Only Matron or a member of the senior management team may communicate directly with parents about child protection issues. Parents/carers will generally be consulted before a referral is made about them to another agency.** Further guidance on this can be found in the Education Child Protection Procedures section 4.28. – 4.38.
- 2.7.2 ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the Parents' Handbook.

## **3 SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

- 3.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.
- 3.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 3.3 We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.
- 3.4 The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:
- 3.4.1 the content of the curriculum to encourage self esteem and self motivation (see section 2)
- 3.4.2 the school ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2)
- 3.4.3 the school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- 3.4.4 liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service.
- 3.4.5 a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so.
- 3.4.6 recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
- 3.4.7 vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Children's Social Care **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**
- 3.5 if a pupil subject of a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Protection & Review Manager will also be informed.

### **3.6 Drug Use and Child Protection**

- 3.6.1 The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the school will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause

- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- to believe the pupil's drug-related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.

### **3.7 Children of Drug Using Parents**

3.7.1 Further enquiries and/or further action will be taken when the school receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection)
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

## **4 PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

- 4.1 The school will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" Department for Education and Skills 2006.
- 4.2 The school will consult with the Children's Social Care team in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Procedures, Green Book and the school's Staff Handbook.
- 4.3 The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.
- 4.4 The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents.
- 4.5 The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of position of trust).

## **5 OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

### **5.1 Physical Intervention**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury to themselves, another person or property.

### **5.2 Bullying**

Our anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. The policy aims to ensure that children do not experience discrimination in respect of age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, disability or sexual orientation and receive protection when they require it.

### **5.3 Health & Safety**

Our Health & Safety policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

#### **5.4 Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs**

The School currently has no children with SEN Statements. However, we recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with SEN Statements or who, although not statemented, have Learning Difficulties are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

### **6 GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES**

6.1 The governing body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to child protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

6.1.1 designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy

6.1.2 ensure an annual report is made to the governing body on child protection matters to include changes affecting Child Protection Policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum.

6.1.3 ensure that this policy is annually updated and reviewed.

#### **Extended Schools and Before and After School Activities**

6.2.1 As the school provides extended school facilities, before and after school, directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection, as written in this policy, shall apply.

### **Standards For Effective Child Protection Practice In Schools**

In best practice, schools:

- 1 have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- 2 provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
- 3 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 children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
- 4 are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
- 5 monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, *in a secure* place, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;



The 'significance' may be in the severity of an injury or from the long term impact e.g. emotional instability from the cumulative effect of inadequate parenting.

Harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 as ill-treatment or impairment of health or development.

Ill-treatment includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

Health includes both physical and mental health.

Development includes: physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.