



Over St. John's C.E. Primary School
'Let your light shine before others.' Matthew 5:16
Child Protection Policy

Schools and colleges have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
'Keeping Children Safe in Education', HM Government (September 2024)

Purpose of a Child Protection Policy

An effective whole school Child Protection Policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

Over St. John's fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect all children and support pupils in school.

Introduction

There are three main elements to our Child Protection Policy.

Prevention	positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils
Protection	by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns
Support	to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused

School Commitment

We recognise that for children, high esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps them all and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse.

Our school will therefore:

Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.

Include in the curriculum activities opportunities for PSHE, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm/ abuse.

Include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare, parenting skills and violence free relationships.

Ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

Framework

Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education', HM Government (September 2024)

Child Protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership (CWSCP).

Roles and Responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children. There are, however, key people within schools and the LA who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures. These are:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Head Teacher) – Mrs Emma Snowdon
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (SENCO) – Mrs Emma Bettley
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (ELSA) – Mrs Sophie Riley

The named governor responsible for Child Protection - Mrs Emma McLaughlin

In the interests of confidentiality, it is not appropriate for all members of the Governing Board to have access to details of individual cases.

Procedures

Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the document produced by the CWSCP and follow our Safeguarding Policy.

Training and Support

Our school will ensure that the Head Teacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and the nominated governor for Child Protection attend training relevant to their role. This training needs to be updated at regular intervals. Latest training was September 2024 for DSL, November 2024 for DDSL and July 2024 for second DDSL.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

Records and Monitoring

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Attendance at Child Protection Conference

Our school recognises the need to attend Child Protection Conferences or to send a written report if attendance is not possible. The member of staff who can contribute the most relevant information to conference should attend. However, inexperienced staff should be supported by the Child Protection Designated Lead or Deputy Designated Leads.

Supporting Pupils at Risk

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider suspension or exclusion from school.

It is also recognised that a minority of children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- the implementation of school behaviour policies (Section 89 (1) of the Education and Inspection Act 2006);
- a consistent, trauma informed approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families;
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interest to do so;
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are:

Behaviour;

Anti-Bullying;

Special Educational Needs;

Health and Safety.

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and /or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Safe Schools, Safe Staff

This school will ensure that all adults, whether members of staff, volunteers or involved in transportation of pupils will be subject to the appropriate level of vetting procedures. The school will follow the Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures in cases of suspected inappropriate conduct by staff in respect of children.

The Use of Photographic Images of Children by Schools

Where it is appropriate to use images of children the school will:

- obtain the active consent of parents [see consent form in office];
- specify how the material will be used;
- ensure that the names of young people are not printed with photographs which could identify individuals without parental consent;
- visits by newspaper employees to schools are planned in advance and a senior member of staff is aware that images are being taken and for what purpose;
- avoid making images in one to one situations;
- make parents and relatives of pupils aware that any photographs or video film they take at school events are likely to contain images of children who will not have given their permission to be filmed or photographed. Such images should not be circulated more widely than the family.

The Child in Need Referral Form

Referral to Social Care should be used when we consider that a child has needs which cannot be solely met by the services or resources within the Education Community Department and where, following an

assessment of the situation, we believe co-ordinated intervention is required to promote, safeguard or protect the welfare of the child.

Where, following an assessment of the situation, it is considered immediate protective action is required, a child protection referral must be made by the DSL / DDSLs. This referral will initially be to the i-ART team by telephone on 0300 123 7047 and will be confirmed in writing by forwarding the Multi Agency Referral Form to Children's Services, within 24 hours.

In these circumstances, we will have records detailing what work has been undertaken by our school to support the child and family and why we believe that a more corporate and co-ordinated approach is needed. This information then provides the basis for the completion of the Initial Assessment. The request for co-ordinated support services for a family should always be discussed with parents unless to do so would place the child or others at risk of harm.

Procedures to follow if a member of staff is concerned about the welfare or safety of a child

All child welfare concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, **Emma Snowdon**.

If unavailable, they should be reported to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, **Emma Bettley or Sophie Riley** who will respond in her absence.

The Governor with responsibility for child protection is **Emma McLaughlin**.

This person should then assess the concerns taking advice from the EWO, CP Adviser or Children's Social Care if necessary.

The concerns should be recorded noting any injury and quoting the child's own words if an allegation is made. Care must be taken **NOT** to ask a child leading questions or attempt to investigate the allegations of abuse as this may jeopardise a police investigation.

The child should be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that staff cannot promise confidentiality in Child Protection cases but must talk to other adults in order to stop the concerns happening again.

The most appropriate member of staff from school should then talk with the parents unless this conversation would increase the risk to the child or if sexual abuse is suspected.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed: *H Rogers*

Chair of Governors

Signed: *E Snowdon*

Head Teacher

Date: January 2025

Review Date: January 2026