

BEBINGTON HIGH SPORTS COLLEGE



Child Protection Policy

Agreed/Reviewed by Governors – see reverse

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The Designated Senior Teacher for Child Protection is:

Miss N MacLennan Assistant Teacher Social Inclusion

In his/her absence the role will be undertaken by: **Mr B. K. Jordan Headteacher**

In the rare event of both these members of staff being absent concerns should be reported to any other Senior Teacher.

Designated Lead Teacher Child Protection training completed: **Feb 2008**

Refresher training due: **Feb 2010**

Staff training dates: whole school - November 2008 (next training due 2011)

New staff training occurs through the induction programme.

Nominated School Governor for Child Protection is: S Clarke

This policy was ratified by the Governing Body On: 17.09.09

Review date: September 2010

Making referrals

Where a child is registered at school, consultation must take place with the school's designated teacher for Child Protection who will be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral. A written record of your concerns should be made using the schools internal recording form. This should then be given to the Designated Child Protection teacher who may decide to make a referral to Central Advice and Duty Team based within Social Care.

For referral to **CADT** telephone **0151 606 2022**. (9am- 5pm) or **EDT 677 6557** (after 5pm) (see appendix 2) to speak to the Duty Social Worker. The telephone referral will need to be followed up with written confirmation on the Multi-agency referral form. (see appendices)

Introduction

Bebington High Sports College recognises its legal duty under s175 Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all children. The school recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations.

This procedures document provides the basis for good practice within the school for Child Protection work. It should be read in conjunction with the Wirral Local Safeguarding Board Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the Board considers to be safe and professional practice in this context. Child Protection has to be

considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004. Within the context of Every Child Matters, this takes account of the need for children "being healthy and staying safe".

These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements and procedures.

All procedures can be found on the LSCB website :

www.wirral.gov.uk/lscb/

Underpinning values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, **Bebington High Sports College** will work in accordance with the principles outlined in the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection procedures:

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.
- Each child is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs.
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare. Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free.
- Open-mindedness and honesty must guide each stage of assessment and of operational practice and each school should follow inter-agency protocols. The strengths of individual family members, as well as their needs, should be given due consideration.
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict "need to know" basis.

- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation.
- Early intervention in providing support services under the Children's Trust arrangements is an important principle of practice in inter-agency work for safeguarding the welfare of children.

The school will foster an ongoing culture of vigilance to maintain a safer environment for all students by:

- Ensuring that senior members of staff have undertaken the National College for School Leadership 'Safer Recruitment' course and are committed to working to the guidelines recommended.
- Checking the suitability of all prospective staff and volunteers during the recruitment process by checking the Independent Safeguarding Authority register of people cleared to work with children as well as carrying out a Criminal Records Bureau check.
- Formulating an induction policy and programme for new staff and volunteers with the emphasis on Safeguarding Children.
- Ensuring that the Designated Senior Teacher for Child Protection has undergone suitable training for their role and that this training is refreshed every 2 years.
- Arranging whole school staff training in Child Protection every 3 years. This training to include all staff e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, administration and caretaking staff; and anyone else who has regular contact with the students.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Supporting students who have been abused by co-operating with other professionals (as recommended by 'Working Together' 2009.) to carry out our responsibilities outlined in any Child protection Plan issued at a Child Protection Case Conference.
- Establishing a safer environment in which children can learn and develop.

Establishing a safer Environment.

The school will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHCE and ICT curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise risks and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the Designated Senior Teacher responsible for child protection and their role in helping staff to safeguard students.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- 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 school prospectus.
- Notify Wirral Social Care department if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is the subject of a child protection plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children to enable appropriate support to be targeted effectively e.g. 'Team Around the Child' meetings.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations.

The school will endeavour to support students through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school. The school will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student such as Wirral Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services and the Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that, when a student who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within 2 weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved
- After 20 days absence if a child has moved and the new school is unknown the school will post details on the 'Student to Student' register.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the nominated Governor for Child Protection and the Designated Senior Teacher for Child Protection.

Appendices

- 1. Guidance on Child Protection matters**
- 2. Telephone numbers for referral**
- 3. Useful telephone numbers**
- 4. Allegations against staff guidance**

Any other Policies mentioned in the body of the policy or that the school feels comes under the remit of safeguarding children.

Appendix 1

Guidance on 'Whether this is a Child Protection Matter'

If staff have significant concerns about any child they should make them known to the school's Designated or Deputy Designated Child Protection Teachers.

These concerns may include:

Physical abuse:

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse:

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development? It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect:

Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development? Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

Is this a child with additional needs where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? Wirral Children and Young People's Framework says practitioners should complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the CAF trained practitioner in your school, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for a CAF to be completed.

Is this child in need? s17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.

- their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- they are disabled.

Is this a child protection matter? s47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm.
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- serious health problems.

If this is a child in need, discuss the issues with the designated child protection teacher and parents. Obtain their consent for referral to First Response (see below) or any other agency.

If this is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the designated teacher and will need to be referred to CADT by the school as soon as possible.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under S.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration.

Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

All staff will have training on all the above issues on induction to school and every 3 years via a Wirral LSCB validated basic 'Safeguarding Children' course.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation.

You can never guarantee confidentiality to a child as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

"There are some secrets I can't keep; but I promise that if someone is hurting or frightening you I will help keep you safe. I cannot do that on my own and will need to talk to about it"

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, included social service departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8).

Wherever possible consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared.

The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. Legal advice should be sought if in doubt from the Legal Services Department.

Talking to and listening to children

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- be accessible and receptive;
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace;
- take what is said seriously;
- reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- make a careful record of what was said.

You should NEVER:

- take photographs or examine an injury;
- investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions;
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- speculate or accuse anybody;
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the persons allegedly involved;
- forget to record what you have been told;
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, you may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

Record keeping

Well kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- state who was present, time, date and place;
- use the child's words wherever possible;
- be factual/state exactly what was said;
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation;
- be written in ink and signed by the recorder;

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

The Designated Child Protection Teacher or their deputy will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the class teacher or head of year to attend the subsequent core group meetings.

Appendix 2

The following poster is displayed in suitable areas

Making a Referral in Wirral

- Central Advice and Duty Team Telephone: 606 2008
- Fax: 606 2002
- Secure e-mail:
cadtchildrensocialcare@wirral.gov.uk
- Emergency Duty Team
Telephone: 677 6557
- Family Crime Investigation Unit: Telephone: 777 2685



Appendix 3

Other useful telephone numbers.

Caroline McKenna - Principal Safeguarding Manager - 666 5776

Julia Hassel - Head of Branch, Child and Families, CYPD - 606 2000

Ken McKenzie – LADO (Allegations against staff) – 666 4582

Shelagh Hozack – Safeguarding Training Officer – 346 6752

Appendix 4

Protecting yourself against allegations of abuse

You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following sensible precautions can be taken when working alone with children:

- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally.
- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards.
- must not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses
- must not give students lifts home in your cars
- must not arrange to meet them outside of school hours
- must not chat to students on the social websites

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a student even when the student is over the age of consent.

Any use of physical force or restraint against students will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant physical restraint policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others parents will be informed.

Children will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment.

Allegations of abuse against a professional

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer should therefore be taken seriously.

If an allegation is received by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors the following should be considered

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

Allegations of abuse made against staff, whether historical or contemporary, should be dealt with by the Headteacher; not the designated child protection teacher in cases where this role is not undertaken by the Head (if the allegation is against the Head then it should be dealt with by the Chair of Governors). The Head / Chair should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Ken McKenzie - 666 4582 to discuss the allegation.

This initial conversation will establish the validity of any allegation and if a referral is needed to CADT. If this is the case a strategy meeting will be called that the Head / Chair should attend.

The decision of the strategy meeting could be:

- investigation by children's social care
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- single agency investigation completed by the school which should involve the Schools Senior HR advisor

The fact that a member of staff offers to resign should not prevent the allegation procedure reaching a conclusion.

FLOWCHART – ALLEGATION AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF