

**Bebington High Sports College  
Co-operative Community Trust**



**SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOLS**

**November 2009**

# **Guide to Professional Conduct**

All staff working in a school setting can have a profound and lasting influence on the development and life chances of children and young people. We are in a position of trust and the following guidelines focus on the way in which we conduct ourselves on a day – to – day basis, to enable us to maintain this position of trust and our professional values.

**It is expected that staff will:**

## **Put the wellbeing, development and progress of children and young people first**

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people under their supervision
- Follow their school's child protection policies and procedures (see separate Child Protection Policy)
- Establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationship with children and young people
- Use appropriate channels to raise concerns about the practice of other staff if this has a negative impact on learning or progress or risks harming children and young people

## **Take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their working practice**

- Reflect on their practice and use feedback from colleagues to help them recognise their own development needs; actively seek out opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and practice.

## **Help children and young people to become confident and successful learners**

- Uphold children's and young people's rights and help them to understand their responsibilities.
- Have high expectations of all children and young people, whatever their background or aptitudes, and find activities that will challenge and support them all.
- Communicate clear expectations about student behaviour to ensure disruption to learning is minimised and children and young people feel safe and secure.

## **Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote equality**

- Act appropriately towards all children and young people, parents, carers and colleagues, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief.

- Take responsibility for understanding and complying with school policies relating to equality of opportunity, inclusion, access and bullying.
- Address unlawful discrimination, bullying and stereotyping no matter who is the victim or the perpetrator.

### **Strive to establish productive partnerships with parents and carers**

- Provide parents and carers with accessible and accurate information about their child's progress.
- Follow school policies and procedures on communication with, and involvement of, parents and carers, including those that relate to sensitive areas such as attendance and exclusion.

### **Work as part of a whole-school team**

- Endeavour to develop productive and supportive relationships with all school colleagues.
- Uphold school policies and procedures, and raise any concerns about the life or running of the school in a responsible and appropriate way.
- Recognise the important role of the school in the life of the local community, and take responsibility for upholding its reputation and building trust and confidence in it.

### **Co-operate with other professionals in the children's workforce**

- Seek to understand the roles of other professional colleagues in the children's workforce.
- Understand that in sharing responsibility for children and young people's wellbeing and development they should always act within their own competence and responsibilities.

### **Demonstrates honesty and integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in those working in a school setting.**

- Understand that their duty to safeguard children and young people comes first, but otherwise acknowledge the rights of children and young people, families, and colleagues to confidentiality, in line with the statutory requirements and school policies.
- Maintain reasonable standards in their own behaviour that enable them to maintain an effective learning environment and also to uphold public trust and confidence in the profession.

# Safeguarding and Welfare: Child Protection Policy – Code of Practice

Staff who work within school have a key role in the protection of children and young people. The extensive day to day contact which staff have, means that they will be in a position to notice concerns or, have children and young people disclose information to them that may be indicative of abuse.

## **The legal Context**

- The Children's Act 1989 established two categories of intervention for Local Authorities in relation to their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
  - Voluntary intervention to provide to a 'child in need' whose health and/or development is likely to be impaired without this intervention (section 17)
  - Compulsory intervention to carry out enquires if there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- Requirements in this area have moved on following a number of recent enquiries and it is not accidental that the term 'safeguarding' has come to replace the term 'child protection'. The term 'safeguarding' is contained in the Education Act 2002 (section 175) which requires LAs and school governors to exercise their functions "...with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children"

This statutory duty came into effect on 1 June 2004

## **What constitutes abuse?**

- There are four categories of abuse
  - **Physical abuse**
  - **Sexual abuse**  
Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
  - **Neglect**  
Persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.
  - **Emotional abuse**  
Persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development.

## **Awareness of possible recognition signs**

- **Physical abuse**
  - Injuries to any part of the body

- Children who find it painful to walk, sit down, to move their jaws or are in some other kind of pain
- Injuries which are not typical of the bumps and scrapes associated with children's activities
- The regular occurrence of unexplained injuries.
- The child who is frequently injured, where even apparently reasonable explanations are given.
- Confused or conflicting explanations of how the injuries were sustained.

### ***Behavioural signs***

- Furtive, secretive behaviour
- Uncharacteristic aggression or withdrawn behaviour
- Compulsive eating or sudden loss of appetite
- The child who suddenly becomes ill co-ordinated
- The child who finds it difficult to stay awake
- The child who is repeatedly absent
- Consider what is known about the family – Do you or other colleagues have any concerns about the family? Is this documented?

## ■ Sexual abuse

There may be no recognisable signs of sexual abuse but the following indicators may be signs that a child is or has been sexually abused.

### ***Physical signs***

- Signs of blood or other discharge on the child's under clothes
- Awkwardness in walking or sitting down
- Tummy pains
- Regression into enuresis
- Tiredness

### ***Behavioural signs***

- Extreme variations in behaviour eg anxiety, aggression or withdrawal
- Sexually provocative behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with the child's age and understanding
- Drawings or written work which are sexually explicit (indirect disclosure)
- Direct disclosure. It is important to recognise that children have neither the experience nor the understanding to be able to make up stories about sexual assault.

## ■ Neglect

Indicators of neglect are recognisable in the child, in the parent/carers behaviours and within the home or school environment.

### ***Physical signs***

- Abnormal growth including faltering growth
- Underweight or obesity
- Recurrent infection
- Unkempt dirty appearance
- Smelly
- Inadequate/unwashed clothes
- Hunger
- Listlessness

### ***Behavioural signs***

- Attachment disorders
- Indiscriminate friendliness
- Poor social relationships
- Poor concentration
- Developmental delays
- Low self-esteem
- Weariness

### ***Environmental signs***

- Insufficient food, heating and ventilation in the home
- Risk from animals in the household
- Inappropriate sleeping arrangements and inadequate bedding
- Dangerous or hazardous environment – lack of safety in the home

## **■ Emotional Abuse**

- The recognition of emotional abuse is based on observations over time of the quality of relationships between parent/carer and the child. Be aware of reported or observed parent/carer behaviours
- Poor relationship with the child resulting in the lack of attachment
- Unresponsive or neglectful behaviour towards the child's emotional or psychological needs
- Persistent negative comments about the child
- Inappropriate or inconsistent developmental expectations of the child
- Parental problems that supersede the needs of the child
- Dysfunctional family relationships including domestic violence

### **Behavioural signs**

- Emotional indicators such as low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress, anxiety
- Behavioural indicators such as attention seeking, opposing, withdrawn, insecure
- Physical factors such as failure to thrive/faltering growth, delay in achieving developmental, cognitive or educational milestones.

## Procedure when dealing with disclosures and/or concerns about the safeguarding and welfare of a child or young person (Refer to Bebington High Sports college Children Protection Policy)

### **DO**

- Know the name of the Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection N MacLennan and the Deputy DSP B Jordan
- Know who to go to if the above are unavailable (Any member of SLT or CADT)
- Listen positively, and re-assure the child to retain their trust, whilst explaining the need to inform other professionals
- Find help quickly, having ensured the child is safe and supported
- Make careful records of what was said using the child's own words, as soon as is practicable following disclosure. Date, time and sign the record. This record may be used in any subsequent legal proceedings. Pass this to the DSP.
- Ask an open ended question if a question needs to be asked for clarification. Do not direct answers by questioning.
- **Report to the DSP immediately any allegation, and especially if any disclosure is of a sexual nature**
- Report any allegation against a member of staff or yourself immediately to the Headteacher (Deputy Head should an allegation be made against the Headteacher) or the DSP should any of the above not be available.

### **DO NOT**

- Promise confidentiality and/or make promises you cannot keep
- Jump to conclusions
- Directly question the child or suggest words for him/her to use
- Try to get the child to disclose all the details
- Speculate or accuse anybody
- Investigate

### **Safeguarding staff**

All staff who work with children and young people, are aware of their responsibility for helping to safeguarding and promote the welfare and well being of those in their care.

Safeguarding policies, procedures and practises are also about Safeguarding staff. They make staff aware of how they can maintain their professional standards and minimise, as far is possible, the circumstances in which a member of staff might receive a false allegation against them or be accused of a breach of trust or of unprofessional behaviour.

## **Bebington High Sports College - Professional Behaviour Protocol**

- It is **not permitted** for staff to give lifts to individual children unless it is an exceptional last resort and then only after the Head, Deputy or Head's PA has been informed.
- It is **not permitted** for staff to be in a room alone with a child unless there are windows, glass panels in doors or video surveillance.
- When a single child or young person has a detention after school, **ensure** you have informed another member of staff where you are working.
- Staff should avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards

### **Mobile phones**

- It is not permitted for staff to give out their mobile phone number to any child or young person who is at school or college (Staff who have done this should change their mobile number as soon as possible)
- It is not permitted for staff to have the mobile phone numbers of any child or young person (Staff who have any of these numbers should delete them immediately.)  
The only exception to this is for health and safety reasons on a day visit/residential, where staff may have mobile phone numbers of those children on the visit and must use the school mobile on which to contact if necessary. These numbers must be shredded on the visit's conclusion.

### **Email**

- All staff have a school email address which may be used for communication with children and young people, for school related matters.
- It is not permitted for staff to give out their personal email address. This applies to former students.
- Any correspondence with former students must be only on your school email address.

### **E-safety – social networking sites**

- It would be considered misconduct for staff to accept current learners as 'friends' nor to put images of themselves or colleagues, with current learners on a social networking site.
- It would be considered misconduct for staff to accept former students as 'friends' nor to post images of themselves or colleagues with former students, if these students are under 18 years of age.
- Staff are **strongly advised to think very carefully** before accepting as friends or posting images of former students who are over the age of 18.
- Staff must read the facebook/Social Networking Guide paper copy and can access documents via the intranet:
- Adults who work with children and young people up to the age of 18 are not allowed to have a secret or special personal relationship with a child or anyone under 18, whom they know due to their work. To do so would be a serious cause for concern and if deemed to constitute a breach of trust, could lead to dismissal.

- It is illegal for any adult to have communication which results in a private meeting or with the intent of sexual relations, with children or young people in their care.

