



Approved by the Governing Body 3/3/2009

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POLICY FOR

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY FOR BASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE SCHOOL'S 'DESIGNATED TEACHER' IS Frances Dicker

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Code of Practice – THE RED MANUAL. This document can be accessed via the LSCB website; www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb

Background information

All those working in children's services share an objective to safeguard children and young people. All schools and colleges have a pastoral responsibility towards their pupils. They can play a part in the prevention of abuse and neglect, through their own policies and procedures for safeguarding children, and through the curriculum. All schools and colleges should create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people, and should be able to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns. Children can be helped to understand what is and is not acceptable behaviour towards them, and taught about staying safe from harm, and how to speak up if they have worries or concerns. The curriculum can also play a preventive role in preparing children and young people for their future responsibilities as adults, parents and citizens.

'Through their day to day contact with pupils, and direct work with families, education staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage. They should refer those concerns to the appropriate organisation, normally LA children's social care, contributing to the assessment of a child's needs and, where appropriate, to ongoing action to meet those needs. When a child has special educational needs or is disabled, schools will have important information about the child's level of understanding and the most effective means of communicating with the child. They will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the child's care or behaviour.' (Working Together to Safeguard Children – 2006)

Section 175 of the Education Act (2002) states:

- (1) A local education authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that the functions conferred on them in their capacity as a local education authority are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- (2) The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

If there are welfare concerns for children or young people with additional needs that involve more than one other agency, the customer service centre (CSC) should be contacted to see if a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) assessment is open. The CAF team will advise on appropriate next steps. CAF is an early intervention tool. No child or young person should be subject to CAF and child protection or child in need process at the same time. One must cease when the other takes over.

No one who is involved in any way with the care of children can escape responsibility for identifying the signs of child abuse and, having done so, for taking appropriate action as outlined below. Accordingly, all staff should familiarise themselves with the procedure outlined in this document as well as with the Code of Practice, which provides definitions of the types of child abuse and gives social and medical indicators of abuse/neglect.

The **designated teacher** acts as the focal point for all matters concerning safeguarding children and young people. One of the primary tasks is to act as the contact between school, the family and other agencies.

Incidents of possible child abuse obviously need to be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality consistent with the multi-disciplinary approach. If there is any cause for concern whatsoever it is vital that information is passed to the **designated teacher** immediately. In the event, following statutory investigation, of concerns proving to be unfounded, staff should not reproach themselves for having raised the issue. In cases of this nature it is always better to be safe than sorry.

THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES MUST BE ADHERED TO

The school will:

- ensure that it has a **designated teacher** who has undertaken the LSCB's 4-Day Safeguarding Children and Young People Course and attends a refresher course every 2 years thereafter.

- ensure that every member of staff and every governor knows:
 - the name of the **designated teacher** and his/her role.
 - that they have individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the Code of Practice.
 - where the LSCB Code of Practice is located and other supporting documents.
- ensure that members of staff and volunteers receive training on signs and symptoms of abuse every 3 years and know how to respond appropriately to a pupil who may disclose abuse.
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children and young people and have access to the school's safeguarding children and young people policy.
- ensure that safe recruitment practices are adopted which help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. (Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2006)
- ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the school reviews its safeguarding children and young people policy annually.
- ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding children and young people arrangements are brought to the attention of the governing body and are remedied without delay.
- ensure that a member of the governing body is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer and/or partner agencies, as appropriate, in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher.

Child needing immediate medical treatment:

If a child comes to school in need of immediate medical treatment they should initially be taken to the school's designated first-aider, where appropriate action will be taken. This may involve:

- A call or delivery to the local health centre.
- Delivery to hospital.
- Call to emergency services.

If in the judgement of the **designated teacher**, there are indications that the cause of the problem may be related to child abuse, the medical professionals must be informed. The **designated teacher** must refer the case to Social Care (see procedures below). Provision of medical treatment should not be delayed by attempts to contact the parent or guardian in advance and in some cases of suspected child abuse it would be inappropriate to alert parents (see below).

Child about whom there is a suspicion of possible abuse but no need for immediate medical treatment:

- If it is believed that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, even in the absence of any physical evidence, this should be brought to the attention of the statutory child protection services immediately.
- The **designated teacher** should make a referral to Social Care via the Children's Services Customer Service Centre on 01522 782111.
- It is good practice for professionals to discuss any concerns they have with the family and, where possible, to seek the family's agreement to making a referral to Social Care. Full details of any such conversation should be recorded. However there are exceptional circumstances where such discussion and agreement-seeking would place the child at increased risk of significant harm. In these circumstances it can be appropriate to refer without agreement from the family, although Social Care will subsequently disclose the source of the referral to the family. In cases where a professional is acting in good faith on third party information it may not be appropriate for Social Care to reveal the source of the referral. In either event Social Care will advise the professional of their decision on this point.

- Other factors relevant to the decision to refer without prior discussion with the family include:
 - Issues of staff safety.
 - The risk of destroying evidence.
 - The likelihood of children or other family members being intimidated.
 - The possibility of an increased risk of domestic violence.
 - The possibility of the family moving to avoid professional scrutiny.
- Teachers must not themselves take any further action although if a parent, guardian or other individual volunteers information this should be recorded and passed on.
- On referral to Social Care the **designated teacher** needs to be clear about:
 - The nature of the concerns.
 - How and why they have arisen.
 - What appear to be the needs of the child and family, including any special needs arising from cultural, physical, psychological, medical or other factors.
 - If known, what other agencies and professionals are involved with the child and family.
 - His/her expectations of Social Care.
 - The action to be taken by Social Care upon receipt of the referral.
 - The action to be taken, and by whom, if any agreed plan is not carried out.

All verbal communications should be confirmed in writing, using the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) Form, within 24 hours.

Additional requirements:

- The **designated teacher** should keep records of any signs of abuse, neglect or any other injury and of any action taken which are timed, dated and signed. He/she should record the circumstances which caused the concern and indicate any visible injuries by way of a description and rough sketch – no photograph should be taken except by the police and/or Social care if appropriate. Any explanation or comments made by the child or their carer should be recorded in their exact words if possible. It should also be recorded whether or not the family have been informed of the reasons for the concern and the actions taken by the **designated teacher**.

It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate suspicions of child abuse but to pass on all relevant information to Social Care via the Customer Service Centre (CSC). Any investigations conducted by the school are potentially detrimental to the formal investigative process and ultimately to the safety of the child in question.

- Where others, such as Education Welfare Officers, Youth Workers or Educational Psychologists are involved, the **designated teacher** should check with them to see if they have any concerns. Their comments should be noted and passed on with the referral to Social Care. The designated teacher can also check whether the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan by contacting the Child Protection and reviewing Unit on 01522 554061. This action does not constitute a referral.
- Following a Child Protection Investigation where the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of harm, Social Care may convene a Child Protection Conference. It is expected that the **designated teacher** will attend and provide a written report. If they are unable to attend for unavoidable reasons, or send a representative, they should submit the written report in the format provided by the LA (contact the Child Protection team for details, contact information at the end of this chapter.) **It is essential that schools are represented at conference, and any subsequent Core Group Meetings and that they actively participate in any Child Protection Plan for children on their school roll.**
- If, following an Initial Investigation, concerns are substantiated but the child is not judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm, Social Care may decide that a plan for the child's future safety and welfare can be implemented without the need to convene a Child Protection Conference. If the **designated teacher** still has serious concerns that a child may not otherwise be adequately safeguarded he/she can request that Social Care convene a Child Protection Conference. Any such request needs to seek the support of Education's Senior Liaison Officer (see below).

- Section C of the Code of Practice describes more fully Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and Reviews.
- All schools should have in place a contingency plan should the designated person be unavailable. In any event reporting suspicion of child abuse should not be delayed.
 - Where any member of staff becomes aware of an allegation of child abuse made against a colleague Child Protection Procedures **must** be followed. The Headteacher must be notified or, where the allegation is against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors must be informed. **All allegations of alleged or suspected abuse must be reported to Sheridan Dodsworth, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).**

This applies even where the nature of the alleged assault would not normally meet the threshold applied to children in their own families. For example, a report of a child being smacked by a parent, with no injury caused, would be unlikely to require any response by Police or Social Care. However, a similar report of a child being smacked by a teacher should be responded to because of:

- **The vulnerability of children away from home**
- **The higher standards of conduct demanded by law and regulation of those caring for other people's children**
- **The position of trust enjoyed by such people**

Full details of how to respond to an allegation made against a member of staff can be found in the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Code of Practice and in 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2006', published DFSCF, formally DfES. **It is not the responsibility of the school to investigate allegations made against staff. All allegations against members of staff or volunteers in school should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).**

- Advice on any aspect of Child Protection can be sought from the Child Protection Team:
- Anne Faulkner, Child Protection Officer 01522 554687
- Ruth Fox, Assistant Child Protection Officer 01522 554689

- Advice regarding allegations against staff and volunteers in school can be sought from Sheridan Dodsworth, Local Authority Designated Officer and Senior Liaison Officer, contact 01522 554674.

Lincolnshire County Council
Children's Services
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Paul Colam
Chair of Governors