

West Exmoor Federation



Child Protection Policy

October 2009

West Exmoor Federation Child Protection Policy

This policy was developed by the staff and governors in the West Exmoor Federation and is based upon a model policy devised by Devon Children and Young People's Services. It was adopted in October 2009 and is due to be reviewed again in October 2010. The designated person for Child Protection is Jayne Peacock (Executive Headteacher).

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with government publications:
"Working Together to Safeguard Children" 1999
"Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families" 2000
"What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused" 2003*
"Safeguarding Children in Education", DfES Guidance, September 2004
Devon LSCB On Line Child Protection Procedures (DCC website)
Safeguarding Children in Education – Guidance from DfES Nov 2005
Section 11 Children Act 2004 (Statutory Guidance).
- 1.2 The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard** and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our federation to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.
- * Guidance for all staff who come into contact with children June 2003
- ** Safeguarding (as defined in the Joint Inspector's Safeguarding report) is taken to mean "All agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare are minimised" and "where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agree local policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies"
- 1.3 We recognise that all staff *** and governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.
- 1.4 All staff believe that our federation should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.5 The aims of this policy are:
- 1.5.1 To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience.
 - 1.5.2 To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
 - 1.5.3 To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
 - 1.5.4 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the federation, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children.
 - 1.5.5 To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils.
 - 1.5.6 To develop a structured procedure within the federation which will be followed by all members of the federation community in cases of suspected abuse.
 - 1.5.7 To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children.
 - 1.5.8 To ensure that all adults within our federation who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of our facilities.

*** "Staff" covers ALL adult staff on site, including temporary, supply and ancillary staff, and volunteers working with children

2.0 Procedures

2.1 Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Devon L.A. and Devon LSCB Child Protection Procedures. We will ensure that:

- 2.1.1 The governing body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- 2.1.2 We have a Designated Person for child protection who has undertaken Basic Child Protection Training delivered through the Devon Local Safeguarding Children Board and who undertakes other training as recommended by the L.A. every two years.
- 2.1.3 We have a member of staff who will act in the Designated Person's absence who has, ideally, also received basic multiagency training, and who will have been briefed in the role.
- 2.1.4 All members of staff are provided with opportunities to receive training by the Designated Person in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse every three years.
- 2.1.5 All members of staff, volunteers, and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- 2.1.6 All parents/carers are made aware of the federation's responsibilities in regard to child protection procedures through publication of the Federation's Child Protection Policy, and reference to it in our prospectus/brochure and home school agreement.
- 2.1.7 Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on federation sites at any time, and ensure that the Hirer(s) have suitable Safeguarding arrangements in place.
- 2.1.8 Community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
- 2.1.9 Our selection and recruitment policy includes all appropriate checks on staff suitability including Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks. ****
- 2.1.10 The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to the DCSF Misconduct Team, with the advice and support of Education Personnel and in accordance with the Barring Regulations.*****
- 2.1.11 Our procedures will be annually reviewed and up-dated.
- 2.1.12 The name of the Designated Person will be clearly shown in the school, with a statement explaining the federation's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- 2.1.13 All adults, (including supply teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers), new to our federation will be given/loaned a copy of our child protection policy, the booklet "What To Do if You're Worried A Child is Being Abused", and the name and contact details of the designated person and have these explained, as part of their induction into the school.

**** Safe recruitment practice means scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and qualifications, obtaining character and professional references, checking previous employment history and that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job, and a face to face interview as well as the mandatory check of List 99, and, where appropriate, a Criminal Records Check.

***** The 'Barring Regulations' are the 'Procedures for Barring or Restricting People Working with Children in Education' DfES July 2003

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 We understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children.
- 3.2 We have a Designated Person (a senior member of the leadership team) who is responsible for:
 - 3.2.1 Referring by telephone a child's details if there are concerns about his/her welfare, possible abuse or neglect to the local Social Care office. A written record of the referral will be faxed/posted/mailed to Social Care, (using the multi-agency referral form), and a copy to the L.A. Senior Education Welfare Officer for Child Protection within one hour of the telephone call or as soon as possible within the school day.
 - 3.2.2 Ensuring that written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

- 3.2.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records, with a front sheet listing dates and brief entry to provide a chronology.
- 3.2.4 Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- 3.2.5 Acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- 3.2.6 Attending (or delegating this requirement to another appropriately informed member of staff) case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributing to the Framework for Assessments process, and providing a report which has been shared with the parents.
- 3.2.7 Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's SC Team.
- 3.2.8 Ensuring that all federation staff are aware of this policy and know how to recognise and refer any concerns.
- 3.2.9 Providing, with the Executive Headteacher, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Person and by all staff and governors; relevant curricular issues, number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children referred to Social Care and made subject of a Child Protection Plan, (anonymised).
- 3.2.10 Keeping themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant training provided by the Devon Local Safeguarding Board, or the L.A..

4.0 Supporting Children

- 4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth.
- 4.2 We recognise that the federation may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 4.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 4.4 Our federation will support all pupils by:
 - 4.4.1 Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum.
 - 4.4.2 Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the federation.
 - 4.4.3 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
 - 4.4.4 Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
 - 4.4.5 Ensuring that a named teacher is designated for Children in Care (CIC) and that an up to date list of children is regularly reviewed and updated. The Education Welfare Officer for the federation must be made aware of all CIC in the federation.
 - 4.4.6 Providing continuing support to a pupil (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the federation by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Head at the pupil's new school as a matter of urgency.

5.0 Confidentiality

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 5.2 The Executive Headteacher or Designated Person will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being, or that of another.
- 5.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the District Office of Social Care on this point.

6.0 Supporting Staff

- 6.1 We recognise that staff working in the federation who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support. This could be provided by, for example, the Head Teacher, by Occupational Health and/or a teacher/trade union representative as appropriate.
- 6.3 We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The document "Guidance for Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings" provides advice on this and the circumstances which should be avoided in order to limit complaints against staff of abuse of trust, and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.
- 6.4 We recognise that designated staff should have access to support (as in 6.2 above) and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised by the L.A.

7.0 Allegations against staff

- 7.1 All federation staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. (See also 6.3 above)
- 7.2 All staff should be aware of the Federation Behaviour Policy. This can be found on the federation website.
- 7.3 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.
 - 7.3.1 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher or the most senior teacher if the Headteacher is not present.
 - 7.3.2 The Headteacher/senior teacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Lead Officer for Child Protection, or with their link Personnel Officer.
 - 7.3.3 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as in 7.3.2 above, without notifying the Headteacher first.
 - 7.3.4 The federation will follow the L.A. procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which can be found in the Safeguarding File.
 - 7.3.5 Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult (as in 7.3.2. above)) in making this decision.
 - 7.3.6 Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will manage the suspension of adults where necessary from federation premises.

8.0 Whistleblowing

- 8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 8.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to the delegated 'whistleblowing' governor or the Lead Officer for Child Protection at Redworth House Totnes (01392 386810)

9.0 Physical Intervention/Positive Handling

- 9.1 Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately, as part of our Behaviour Policy.
- 9.2 Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- 9.3 Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention should be appropriately trained (Team Teach).
- 9.4 We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

10.0 Anti-Bullying

- 10.1 Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

11.0 Racist Incidents

11.1 Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

12.0 Domestic Violence

12.1 Our policy on Domestic Violence is set out in a separate policy. It recognises that exposure to domestic violence can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional well-being and acknowledges that staff themselves can be victims or perpetrators of domestic violence.

13.0 Prevention

13.1 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

13.2 The federation community will therefore:

13.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.

13.2.2 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the federation whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

13.2.3. Provide across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

14.0 Health & Safety

14.1 Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment, and for example in relation to internet use, and when away from the federation when undertaking school trips and visits.

15.0 Policy Review

15.1 The Governing Body of our federation is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.