



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Trustees and staff of Great Oaks Small School take seriously our responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes the CSF guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007), the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006). The school will also refer to the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (Purple Book) published in 2007.

The Designed Child Protection Co-ordinator (DCPC) who has overall responsibility for child protection practice in School is Liz Baker in the event of her absence Julie White.

As part of the ethos of the school we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that students have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
- Using the PSHE, Council meetings or student buddies to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting other
- Working with parents/carers to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication through training and regular updates
- Monitoring children and young people who have been identified as "in need" including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals
- Developing and maintaining effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School:

The school is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with local and national procedure. This process implemented in April 2001 follows the requirements of the central government guidance contained in the Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children. The child protection process is now incorporated within a more comprehensive remit for safeguarding all children and promotion their welfare.

The role of Great Oaks within this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need including children who may have suffered, be suffering or who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The school may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

All adults in school have a role to play in relation to:

- Protecting children from abuse
- Promoting the welfare of children
- Preventing children from being harmed

The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator:

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating child protection action within school
- Liaising with other agencies
- Ensuring the locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns
- Making referrals as necessary
- Maintaining a confidential recording system
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency meetings in particular Child Protection Conferences
- Managing and monitoring all school's part in Child care/protection plans
- Organising training for all school staff
- Liaising with other professionals

GENERAL STRATEGIES;

This section gives an opportunity for staff to identify the specific ways in which safeguarding issues are addressed within the curriculum, policies and guidance or through school/community initiatives as part of the Every Child Matters Agency.

This may include:

PHSE and schemes of work to empower children to better protect themselves
Behaviour Management Policy
Peer mentoring
Anti-Bullying Policy
Care Plans/Education Plans
e-Safety Policy
Photographic Images of Children Policy
School Councils

Complaints Procedures
Health & Safety
Risk Assessments
PROCEDURES

Copies of "Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Handbook" and HM Government "What to do if you are worried a child in being abused – summary" is kept in the staff room and every staff member has a copy of "Child Protection, Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Guidelines for School Staff".

Recognition and categories of abuse:

All staff in school should be aware of the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Responding to concerns:

Concerns for a child or young person may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways, for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure. Any member of staff who has a concern for a child or young person however insignificant this might appear to be should discuss this with the DCPC as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns may be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback)
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child or young person does not volunteer
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk
- Record the conversation as soon as possible on an events record and date it
- Inform the DCPC (Liz or Julie)

Record Keeping

Staff can play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child or young person that gives cause for concern should be recorded on an event record copies of which are kept in the drawer in the hall table. It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Opinion should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base which can also be quoted. Records must be signed and dated with timings if appropriate. It is important to remember that any issues are confidential and staff should know only on a 'need to know' basis.

Information to be Recorded

- Student's name and date of birth
- Student in normal context e.g. behaviour, attitude, (has there been any extreme change)
- Incident(s) which gives rise for concern with dates(s) and times(s)
- A verbatim record of what the student has said
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time of body map
- Action taken

These basic details are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation. Written information should be passed to the DCPC.

Storage of records:

The DCPC will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of students are kept separate from other school files and are stored securely. Information will be shared on a strictly need to know basis and in line with child protection policy guidance.

Referral to Children's Social Services:

It is the responsibility of the DCPC to decide when to make a referral to Children's Social Services or Children's Safeguard Unit. To help with this decision s/he may choose to consult with the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) Elaine Coutts 01227 284682. Advice may also be sought from Children's Social Services Duty Social Workers who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the Child in need/child protection process. **In all but the most exceptional cases parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to Social Services will be sought.**

Referrals to Children's Social Services will be made using Kent's inter-agency referral form. In the situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the County Duty social services office.

If a child or young person is referred, the DCPC will ensure that the Lead Team and only other staff on a 'need to know' basis.

If after consultation with the DCPC a member of staff feels that appropriate action is not being taken in respect of his or her concerns for a child s/he should refer directly to Social Services. If any member of staff is unsure then advice can be sought from the LA's Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) Elaine Coutts.

The child protection Plan

The DCPC will inform members of staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for children and young people who are subject of a child protection plan. These children and young persons must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on an event record and passed immediately to the DCPC or member of the Lead Team. The DCPC or a member of the School's Lead Team will be responsible for reporting or attending all child protection case conferences.

Concerns involving members of staff:

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Head of school who will contact the Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) or to KCC's

Children's Safeguard Unit: 01622 696366 who fulfils the LADO function to discuss and agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and member of staff. Further information regarding the procedure for managing situations involving members of staff, the Head of School or the DCPC can be found in the **Child Protection Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff**. Copies of this document are held by the Head of School or DCPC.

All staff need to be aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt - consult. (For specific guidance on how to respond to allegations against staff, please refer to Safeguarding Children & Safer recruitment in Education (DCSF))

CODE OF PRACTICE

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with relation to child protection. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such event should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff should be aware of the Behaviour Management Policy, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training should be provided.

All school staff should work towards providing an environment and atmosphere for children and young people to enable them to feel safe to talk. However, staff should never promise a child to keep certain information confidential. It must be explained that staff have certain duties to help keep that child safe, which may involve informing others.

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DCPC.

All teachers and teaching assistants have a mentor buddy with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection.

The DCPC can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach Support Line directly.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The DCPC is responsible for ensuring staff including him/herself receive training in the area of child protection. The LA's Children's Safeguards Unit provide training to all schools in the roles and responsibilities of a School DCPC and the Child in need/child protection procedure. Whole staff training in the area of child protection including an overview of the Framework of Assessment is planned for every 3 years in line with DCSF guidance.

MONITORING AND REVIEW:

All school personnel and governors will have a copy of this policy and will have the opportunity to consider and discuss its contents prior to the approval of the Trustees being formally sought.

The policy forms part of our school development plan and will be reviewed annually.

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its content.

School:	Great Oaks Small School
Head of School	Liz Baker
DCPC	Liz Baker
CP Trustee	Penny Jackson
LA (Children's Officer)	Elaine Coutts 01227 284682
Most recent CT Training event	04/01/2010
CP Training Planned	September 2010

This Policy is adjunct to:

- Anti Bullying Policy
- e-Safety Policy
- Photographic Images Policy
- Individual IEPs
- Safer Recruitment & Appointment Procedure

Review Date: April 2011

RECORD OF INCIDENT

Student's Name	
Date of Birth	
Child in Normal Context: e.g. behaviour, attitude etc.	
The Incident:	
Verbatim record of what student has said	
Bruising/injury e.g. position, colour, size, shape and time on body map	
Action Taken:	