

HASSENBROOK SCHOOL Specialist Technology College



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL (February 2010)

DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR

NAME: Deputy Headteacher – Pastoral / Inclusion - Ms J Bray

DEPUTY DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR

NAME: Senior Pastoral Support Manager – Mrs G Mahoney

NOMINATED GOVERNOR FOR CHILD PROTECTION

NAME: Ms Hayes

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The **EDUCATION SAFEGUARDING SERVICE** is able to provide advice and consultancy.

CONTACT NUMBER: **01375 652535**

E-MAIL: **bstannard@thurrock.gov.uk**

REFERRAL TO SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Where schools have **URGENT** and **IMMEDIATE** concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during office hours telephone **01375 652802 / 634**

To make **URGENT** referrals **OUT OF OFFICE HOURS** telephone **01375 652468**

For all **NON – URGENT** referrals and enquiries telephone **0845 603 7627**

INDEX

KEY CONTACTS	Page 2
INDEX	Page 3
PURPOSE	Page 4
INTRODUCTION	Page 4
SCHOOL POLICY	Page 5
FRAMEWORK	Page 5
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	Page 5
PROCEDURES	Page 6
TRAINING AND SUPPORT	Page 7
PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY	Page 8
RECORDS AND MONITORING	Page 8
ATTENDANCE AT CASE CONFERENCES AND CORE GROUPS	Page 8
SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK	Page 9
SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF	Page 10
USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS	Page 10
WHISTLEBLOWING	Page 11
POLICY REVIEW	Page 11

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR HASSENBROOK SCHOOL

“Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.”

(Working Together under the Children Act 1989)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 An effective whole-school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school’s commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Hassenbrook School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. “The welfare of the child is paramount” (Children Act 1989).

- 2.2 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the school ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection/>

- 2.3 There are three main elements to our child protection policy;

- a) Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to students.
- b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- c) Support to students who may have been abused.

- 2.4 This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Hassenbrook School.

- 2.5 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. SCHOOL POLICY

3.1 We recognise that for our students, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) Ensure that students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PHSEE, which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse. Further information can be obtained from the school's PHSEE coordinator.
- d) Include in the curriculum material which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills. Further information can be obtained from the school's PSHEE coordinator.
- e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.

4. FRAMEWORK

4.1 Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) <http://www.shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/>

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **All adults** working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them, to be familiar, and comply with, all relevant child protection procedures.. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.

5.2 It is the role of the **Designated Child Protection Coordinator** to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to Thurrock Social Care Services in accordance with school procedures. The **Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator** works in conjunction with the **Deputy Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator** (see key contact sheet p2) who together will be responsible for contacts with Social Care and other CP agencies, attend CP conferences and CIN meetings. Additionally, it is the role of the Designated Child Protection Coordinator to ensure all staff employed including temporary staff and volunteers within the school are aware of the school's internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.

- 5.3 The **Governing Body and school leadership team** are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the schools recruitment and vetting process the school will ensure that an individual will only be employed, whether paid or voluntary (on a regular basis) if registered with the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) and GTCE. The appropriate checks will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to children.
- 5.4 The role of the **Nominated Governor** for Child Protection is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the LSCB Guidelines are complied with <http://www.shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/> and to support the school in this aspect. Governors must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.
- 5.5 **Other governors** – Where allegations are made against the headteacher, a governor / (other than the Nominated Governor) will be assigned to implement the appropriate procedures. Members of the School Discipline Committee should distance themselves from any investigation or detail related to allegations against members of staff to ensure that they are untainted when it comes to hearing cases that may be brought before them.
- 5.6 **The Headteacher** is responsible for creating a safe environment, for making sure all staff are aware of child protection procedures and for implementing child protection procedures where allegations are made against members of staff.
- 5.7 The **Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator** will provide an annual report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues and is responsible for implementing child protection procedures.
- 5.8 The **Deputy Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator** is responsible for maintaining the daily contacts with Social Care staff, attending CIN meetings and ensuring the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is informed of contact and actions required / taken for new / open cases.
- 5.9 **The Designated Officer for Educational Safeguarding** (Tel: 01375 652535) is available to offer advice, support and training to the school's Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.

6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 All action is taken in line with the following guidance;
- a) Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Guidelines, the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available in Deputy Headteacher's Office and published on <http://shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/>
 - b) "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection/>

- c) What to do if You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused" (published by Department of Health, DfES, Department of Culture Media and Sports, Home Office, Office of Deputy Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellors Department) - see Information for Professionals / National Guidance and Legislation on <http://shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/>
 - d) Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006, Department of Health) - see Information for Professionals / National Guidance and Legislation on <http://shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/>
- 6.2 Staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. There may be other adults in the school who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the school staff. However the Head Teacher will ensure they are aware of the school's policy and the identity of the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- 6.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (see cover sheet) or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Child Protection Coordinator (see cover sheet). In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.
- 6.4 The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator or their Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Thurrock Social Care Direct by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined within module 6 of the SET procedures.
- 6.5 The telephone referral to Thurrock Social Care Direct will be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. Essential information will include the student's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.
- 6.6 The school will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care Services with the parents or carers unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from Thurrock Children's Social Care Services or Essex Police.
- 6.7 A statement in the school brochure will inform parents and carers about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents can obtain a copy of the school child protection policy on request.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- 7.1 All staff will receive regular training on child protection issues and steps will be taken to ensure that all new staff are also trained. In addition to protecting children, the training also enables staff to be more aware of their own vulnerabilities and to take steps to minimise these. All staff should be clear about the circumstances in which physical contact is allowed by law and by any local policy (which may further restrict these).
- 7.2 The school will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator also undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by the Children Education & Families and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date

- Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- 7.3 Support will be available for staff from the Head Teacher in the first instance, and from members of the school's leadership team where there are concerns about queries about child protection.
- 7.4 All staff have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook. Further information is available in the schools Child Protection Training Pack.

8. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

- 8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.
- 8.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

- 9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- 9.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.
- 9.3 These file notes are kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a secure place on the Deputy Headteacher's office. In the same way notes must be kept of any student who is being monitored for child protection reasons.
- 9.4 If a student transfers from the school, these files will be copied for the new establishment and forwarded to the student's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.

10. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES & CORE GROUPS

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the Designated Child Protection Coordinator to ensure that the school is represented or a report is submitted to any child protection conference called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to make decisions on registration at the end of the conference.

- 10.2 When a child is placed on the Child Protection Register and is, therefore, a child with a plan, it is the Designated Child Protection Coordinator's responsibility to ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation. If the school are part of the core group then the Child Protection Coordinator should ensure that the school is represented at these meetings; that there is a record of attendance and issues discussed. All concerns about the child protection plan and / or the child's welfare should be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting unless the child is at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Child Protection Coordinator must inform the child's key worker **immediately** and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed. (See SET procedures chapters 8 for conferences and chapter 9.4 for child protection plans)

11. SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

- 11.1 Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.
- 11.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 11.3 This school will endeavour to support students through:
- a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
 - b) The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
 - c) The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
 - d) A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued.
 - e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the students and their families.
 - f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
 - g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
 - h) Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
 - i) Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- 11.4 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are the policy for the teaching of PSHEE, Behaviour Management Policy (including our policy on physical intervention and our policy on bullying) Child Protection Procedures for managing allegations against staff; Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults working with Children and Young People 2009.

12. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

- 12.1 Pre-employment screening – although it affords no guarantees that child protection issues will not arise, the headteacher will ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on all staff including voluntary helpers and governors. These procedures outlined by the GTCE and ISA Vetting and Barring Scheme 2009 include screening potential employees and undertaking pre-employment medical screening. It is illegal to offer employment that involves regular contact with young people under the age of 18 to anyone who has been convicted of specific offences and / or is included on lists of people considered unsuitable for such work. The school will also ensure that references are taken up from an applicant's last/current employer; any gaps in an employment history will be fully explored and qualifications checked.
- 12.2 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.
- 12.3 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Care Services, the Police or in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.
- 12.4 The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out within Module 12 of the SET procedures.
- 12.5 The Head Teacher or another Deputy Headteacher should in the first instance contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (Tel: 01375 652535). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to make a referral to Thurrock Children's Social Care Services. Where the allegation is against the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will take this action.
- 12.6 If for any reason it is decided that a referral to Thurrock Social Care Services is not appropriate, it will be necessary to address matters in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures in liaison with the school's HR Advisor.

13. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- 13.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING

- 14.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 14.2 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 nominated 'whistleblowing' governor or the Lead Officer for Educational Safeguarding.

15. POLICY REVIEW

- a) The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.
- b) Ensuring that the list of key contacts on the cover sheet is kept up to date.