

# Raynsford VC Lower School

## Safe Guarding Policy (was Child Protection)

Reviewed February '09

### Rationale:

We believe that a caring school promotes the welfare, health, safety and guidance of every child.

### Aim:

- ✓ Our aim is to create a warm, supportive environment in which children feel safe and secure
- ✓ A member of staff has been designated specifically to follow the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Manual of Procedure.
- ✓ Each member of staff is willing to voice concerns to the designated member of staff if s/he suspects a case of child abuse.
- ✓ Staff are knowledgeable and take part in in-service training courses which lead to a greater understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse.
- ✓ The prevention of child abuse is encouraged through teaching which builds awareness of the dangers of abuse.
- ✓ Liaison with other agencies involved in the protection children is encouraged.

### Policy

- A senior member of staff has been designated to have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies. The named member of staff for our school is Mrs. Heather Hill and she is also the designated member of staff for Looked After Children.
- All staff are familiar with child protection procedures and all cases of child abuse are reported immediately to the designated member of staff. Whole staff training took place on January 26<sup>th</sup> and February 13<sup>th</sup>.
- The designated member of staff has responsibility for referring suspected child abuse cases to the Children's Social Care

### The Children Act

- Admission forms will ask for those with parental responsibility and this information will be available in the school office.
- The school will make every effort to ensure that its records accurately reflect the home situation.
- A copy of the child's school report will be sent to those with parental responsibility who request it.
- Injuries that require attention will be logged in the Accident Book. Contact will be made with an adult who has parental responsibility in the case of injuries that give cause for concern and with **all** head injuries
- School staff have the right to 'do what is reasonable in all circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare' (section 3(5) of the Children Act).

### Monitoring and Record Keeping

We can play a vital role in helping abused children and those who are suspected of being abused, by monitoring and recording certain aspects of the child's progress and behaviour in school.

There are three forms that will be maintained:

1. The Child Protection **Recording Form** will be used by the school to make a written record of child protection activities and concerns. They will be signed, dated
2. The school will maintain **cumulative summary front sheets** on all files.
3. The school will also maintain the **chronology form** to record all relevant occurrences. These summaries will be shared as part of the normal interchange of information at all formal and less formal interagency meeting, including child protection conferences.

The school will record occurrences in the following circumstances:

When there is concern in school over:

marks on a child's body  
unusual/different behaviour  
mood changes  
puzzling statements or stories from the child  
information from others

- The file will be kept centrally and confidentiality will be respected
- Safeguarding children records will be kept securely locked and a reference will be made on a child's school file that a child protection file exists.
- The child protection file will be forwarded to a receiving school when the child transfers to a new school.
- The designated member of staff, who is also the Headteacher, will:
  - a) decide when to start and finish monitoring and decide on further action eg contact with parents/social worker etc.
  - b) decide who is required to fill in the forms
  - c) ensure that each entry is dated and signed by the relevant person.

### Confidentiality

- ❑ All staff will be aware that personal information about a child and his/her family is confidential and will only be given to an appropriate person.
- ❑ If abuse is suspected, accurate information will be given immediately to the designated teacher. Other staff need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed child.
- ❑ If staff hear worrying information about children from other parents, neighbours or even other children, this will be passed on to the designated member of staff.
- ❑ If there is a threat to a child's safety and welfare, all staff may have to be alerted to watch for signs of abuse. In such circumstances the family will be informed of this monitoring arrangement.
- ❑ **Teachers will not, in any circumstances, remove a child's clothing. They should only note those marks which they have noticed or which have been brought to their attention by the child. No further examination should be carried out.**

### **Statement in Parents Handbook**

As a school we have a statutory duty to assist social services departments acting on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse. As well as this statutory duty we have a pastoral responsibility towards our pupils and we recognise that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

**Children cannot learn effectively unless they feel safe and secure.**

If we have a concern that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused, it is our duty to refer this to social services. In making any referral, the school will not make any judgements for example, about individual parents or carers. It will be for social services to decide whether there should be an investigation.

There may be other circumstances (which are not to do with safeguarding children, but more related to meeting children's needs) when we feel that a family may benefit from some support from other agencies i.e. social services. Before we do this we will seek your permission before completing a Common Assessment Form, which in most cases this will be done with you.

Update from Group B Safeguarding Children Course.  
11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> February