

Safeguarding Students Policy

September 2010



**Icknield Community College
Love Lane
Watlington
OX49 5RB**

Approval & Review

Approved by:	Governing Body for the academic year 2010/2011
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Statutory Policy

Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The designated teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Conn, Assistant Headteacher and in her absence the Headteacher, Mr Hudson. Should both Mrs Conn and Mr Hudson be absent, the matter should then be referred to the reserve designated teacher (Mrs Julie Turner).

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care. In cases where child abuse is suspected, our paramount responsibility is to the child.

This will be achieved by:

- Continuing to develop awareness of all staff of the need for Child Protection and their responsibilities in identifying abuse. Particular care should be taken with children with disabilities and Special Educational Needs;
- Ensuring all staff are aware of referral procedures within the school;
- Monitoring children who have been identified as 'at risk';
- Ensuring the outside agencies are involved where appropriate;
- Ensuring that key concept of Child Protection as integrated within the curriculum
- Creating an environment where children feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensuring we practise safer recruitment in checking suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children.

Procedures

- Any member of staff with an issue or concern relating to Child Protection should immediately discuss it with the designated teacher. Staff **MUST** make clear to students that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in respect of Child Protection issues. Allegations of Child Abuse must always be given the highest priority and referred immediately to the designated teacher
- The designated teacher will then decide on an appropriate course of action
- Brief nominated Governor concerning Child Protection issues
- Allegations against school staff: Teachers must protect themselves especially when meeting on a one-to-one basis with students and should bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misinterpreted. Teachers who hear an allegation against another member of staff should report it immediately to the Headteacher so that procedures can be followed. If the allegation is against the Headteacher it should be taken directly to an Assistant Headteacher and through her to the Chair of Governors.

Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse

If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about possible abuse, there are a number of things that can be done to support the child:

- Stay calm and be available to listen
- Listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying
- Question normally without pressurising
- Don't put words into the child's mouth, but note the main points carefully
- Keep a full record – date, time, what the child did, said, etc
- Reassure the child and let them know they were right to inform us
- Inform the child that this information will now have to be passed on
- Immediately inform the Assistant Headteacher or when absent, the Headteacher.

For all types of Child Abuse and their symptoms, please refer to Appendix 2.

Monitoring and Record Keeping

It is essential that accurate records are kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. These records should then be kept in secure, confidential files, which are separate from the child's school records. It is important to recognise that regulations do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of any written information relating to Child Protection, although the preferred practice is for parents to be informed of and agree to any referral being made (unless it refers to Sexual Abuse).

All staff must keep the Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) informed of:

- Poor attendance and punctuality
- Concerns about appearance and dress
- Changed or unusual behaviour
- Concerns about health and emotional well being
- Deterioration in educational progress
- Discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child/children
- Concerns about home conditions or situation
- Concerns about student on student abuse (including serious bullying)

When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made, as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. Use of previous records may prove useful.

Any referral to Social Services by telephone must be confirmed in writing and a copy kept in the confidential school file. Another copy should be sent to the Social Inclusion Officer at Macclesfield House, Oxford or County Hall, Aylesbury. A note must be made of the Duty Social Worker and the time at which the call was made. If parents have not been informed about (or if they have agreed to) the referral being made, this must be reported to Social Services.

Reports may be needed for Child Protection Case Conferences or the criminal/civil courts. Consequently records and reports should be:

- Factual
- Non-judgemental
- Clear
- Accurate
- Relevant

The Role of the Designated Teacher

- To ensure that all staff know that Mrs Conn, Assistant Headteacher is responsible (and in her absence the Headteacher) for Child Protection issues
- To refer promptly all cases of suspected child abuse to the local social services department or the police child protection team. If a parent arrives to collect a child before the social worker has arrived then it must be remembered that we have no right to prevent the removal of the child. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the police should be called.
- To maintain and update as necessary the Child Protection Monitoring list.
- To ensure that all staff know about and have access to guidelines on Child Protection
- To co-ordinate action where child abuse is suspected
- To facilitate and support the development of a whole school policy on Child Protection
- To attend case conferences or nominate an appropriate member of staff to attend on her behalf
- Maintain records of case conferences and other sensitive information in a secure confidential file and to disseminate information about the child only on a 'need to know' basis
- To pass on records and inform the key worker when a child who is on the Child Protection register leaves school
- To raise staff awareness and confidence on Child Protection procedures and to ensure that new staff are aware of these procedures
- To keep up to date with current practice by participating in training opportunities wherever possible.

Child Protection Procedures to be observed by all Staff

Child Protection issues can include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Self harm can also constitute a Child Protection issue.

In the event of a concern, staff must pass this on to Designated Teachers for Child Protection.

A concern may still be important even if it appears to be somewhat insubstantial. It could provide crucial additional evidence within a wider picture. Please put it in writing with **dates, names and facts**.

In the event of a disclosure:

- listen carefully to the student
- do not question them yourself
- let them see that you take their concerns seriously
- tell them that you have to pass the information on
- take them to / inform one of the Designated Teachers as soon as practicable
- if it is impossible to listen to the student at that moment, make sure that you make an arrangement to see them as soon as possible
- make notes of what they have told you as soon as you can, and pass these to the designated teacher

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Following a concern or disclosure the Designated teacher will :

- Assess the situation
- Speak to the student as necessary
- Explain what the procedures are likely to be
- Telephone the Social and Health Care Directorate or the Police Child Protection Service as necessary and with the knowledge of the child.
- Discuss with the Duty Office as to the viability of the referral and whether and how to inform parents.
- Report back to the student.
- Speak to parents if that has been agreed with the Social Worker.
- Keep notes on all conversations with student, parents and professionals. File to be made of notes by Student Services PA.
- Confirm the referral in writing to Social and Health Care Directorate, either with a pro forma letter, a collaborative assessment form or other details if required.
- Be prepared to accompany the student if they are to be interviewed by a Social Worker and/or the Police. They should never be seen alone in the absence of parents unless they are already well known to the worker involved and are happy about seeing them without a member of staff present.

- Monitor both the student and any involvement of Social and Health Care Directorate subsequently. Keep the student informed of any developments.
- Keep any staff who referred the student and the Head of Year informed.
- Attend Child Protection Case Conferences / Family Support Conferences, or arrange for another member of staff to do so if this is more appropriate.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Where a child is physically hurt. It can involve hitting, shaking squeezing, burning and biting. It also involves giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. Physical abuse can leave signs – look out for children with frequent bruising, burns, fractures and cuts – all without reasonable explanation of cause.

Sexual Abuse

When children are exploited sexually by adults who use them to meet their own sexual needs. It includes sexual intercourse, fondling, masturbation, oral sex and exposing children to pornographic materials. Children who have been sexually abused often become depressed and withdrawn, they display unusually aggressive behaviour, may have eating problems and relationships with adults that exclude others. They may display over-sexualised behaviour inappropriate for their age.

Neglect

When parents fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children – like foods, clothes, warmth and medical care. Leaving children alone is another form of neglect. Children who have been neglected suffer a number of difficulties, they may seem unusually withdrawn and miserable, they can be over-aggressive, have eating and nutrition problems and be dirty and smelly.

Emotional Abuse

Where a child consistently faces a lack of love and affection, or is continually threatened by verbal attacks, taunting and shouting. Children who have been emotionally abused may seem sad, cry a lot and display apathetic or aggressive behaviour. They may well have a lack of confidence and low self-esteem.

Success Criteria

1. Training of staff completed and updated.
2. Staff follow correct procedures in child protection issues (designated teacher to monitor).
3. Child Protection files maintained securely and kept up to date.

Statutory Responsibilities: DFEE Circular 10/95

In Circular 10/95 the Department for Education and Employment issued guidance on child protection procedures within the education service.

The guidance in Circular 210/95 states that:

- All staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- All schools and college should have procedures (of which all staff should be aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils or students, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of **abuse**.