



MILFORD SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF POLICY – CHILD PROTECTION

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002 and in line with the publications named below:

- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006)
- '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 September 2004)
- 'Safeguarding Children and Safer recruitment in Education (DFES Jan 07)
- 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and other staff' (DfES November 2005)
- Surrey Safeguarding Board SSCB Child protection Procedures (formerly the Surrey Area Child Protection Committee)

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 school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers 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.

All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

AIMS

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected.
- To ensure that they feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- 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.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure that we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To maintain a structured procedure within the school, which all members of the school community will follow in cases of suspected abuse
- To maintain and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers working in our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications and a satisfactory DBS or ISA check (according to guidance) and a central record is kept for audit.

OBJECTIVES

We will ensure that:

- All members of the Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities
- We have two designated senior members of staff, who have undertaken the two day Child Protection Foundation Training delivered through the SSCB, who update their training every two years and who undertake other training as required
- All members of staff are provided with Child Protection awareness at induction, including the school safeguarding statement of policy 'Safeguarding Children' so that they know with whom they should discuss a concern
- The head teacher (where s/he is not the Child protection Liaison Officer) and all other staff and governors have child protection awareness training, updated by the Child Protection Liaison Officer every two years, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse. All other staff receive training every three years undertaken by recommended trainers Babcock 4S
- Through the delivery of the awareness raising pack all members of staff, volunteers and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the school's Child Protection Policy and reference to it in our introductory school pack
- Safeguarding update meetings are made available to parent helpers on an annual basis
- Our Lettings Policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's child protection guidelines and procedures
- Any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies including the DCSF for inclusion on ISA Children's list for Education staff (the same DCSF team can access POCA, the protection of Children Act List, where necessary)
- Our procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. The names of the school's Child Protection Liaison Officers are clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse

RESPONSIBILITIES

The designated Child Protection Liaison Officers are responsible for:

- Referring a child to the Contact Centre Children's Team if there are concerns about possible abuse and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss their concerns. (Contact Centre closing on 10th February 2014. After this date, procedure will be to refer to the South West Assessment Team). Referrals should be made in writing, using the Common Assessment Framework for children and young people (CAF)
- Keeping written records of concern about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals
- Ensuring that either they, the class teacher or the HSLW attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments and provides a report, which has been shared with parents
- Ensuring that any pupil currently subject to a Child Protection Plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Surrey Children's Services
- Organising child protection induction and update training for all school staff including parent helpers
- Providing, with the head teacher, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Child Protection Liaison Officers and by all

staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases and the number of children on the Child Protection Register (anonymised)

PREVENTION

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

The school community will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include across the curriculum, including Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves and find it difficult to maintain a sense of self-worth.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

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.

Our school will support all pupils by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- Notifying Surrey Children's Services as soon as there is a significant concern
- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that when s/he leaves the school all appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the pupil's new school or and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.

- The head teacher or Child Protection Liaison Officers will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise a child's safety or well being.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Surrey Children's services 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 an Assistant Team Manager at the Contact Centre* Children's Team on this point.

*After the 10th February 2014, this will be the South West Assessment Team.

SUPPORTING STAFF

We recognise that staff working in the school, 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. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Child Protection Liaison Officer and to seek further support as appropriate.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out separately in our Behaviour Policy. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events must be recorded and signed by a witness wherever possible.

Staff, who are likely to need to use physical intervention, will be appropriately trained in a BILD approved technique.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under Child Protection or Disciplinary Procedures.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

All school 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.

All staff should be aware of Surrey's guidance on Behaviour Issues and the school's own Behaviour Management Policy. Guidance about conduct and safe practice will be given at induction.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the head teacher.

The head teacher will, on all such occasions, discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer, who is the Local Education Officer for maintained schools such as ours and Surrey Children's Services.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the head teacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors, who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer as above, without notifying the head teacher first.

The school will follow the Surrey procedures for managing allegations against staff. We will not send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given, as a result of a Strategy Meeting.

Suspension of the member of staff (excluding the head teacher) against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration. The head teacher will always seek the advice of the Local Authority Designated Officer and Personnel Consultant in making this decision.

In the event of an allegation against the Head Teacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer and the Personnel Consultant as above.

We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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WHISTLE BLOWING

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff must be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Child Protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance to the Local Authority Designated Officer, in accordance with the Whistle Blowing Policy.

BULLYING

Our policy on bullying is set out in our Behaviour Policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under Child Protection Procedures. This includes homophobic, racist and gender related bullying.

RACIST INCIDENTS

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under Child Protection Procedures.(See Behaviour Management and Equality Policies)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking trips and visits.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Child Protection Liaison Officers are responsible for monitoring the success of this policy and reporting on it annually to Governors. They are also responsible for reviewing policy and procedures and providing staff training in this area of their work at least once per year and as part of staff induction. The Governor with responsibility for Child Protection is the Chair, Jackie Morris, and it is her duty to ensure that policy and procedures are followed. Members of staff also have the opportunity to ask for an earlier review, whenever adjustments to current practice need to be made.

NAMES OF CURRENT CHILD PROTECTION LIAISON OFFICERS:

- **Kay Leggett (Head Teacher)**
- **Abi Morgan (Deputy Head)**

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Please see the list under the heading 'Introduction'
- Surrey Model Child Protection Policy, which drew from documents prepared by Kent Authority and London IRSCs
- Milford School Policies for:
 - Behaviour
 - Confidentiality
 - Racial Equality
 - Safeguarding Children
 - Internet Access
 - Whistle Blowing
 - Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education
 - Staff Code of Practice (For which we have adopted the IRSCS document)

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Annexe 1

GUIDANCE

If a child does disclose abuse to a member of staff, the member of staff should be guided by the following advice:-

- Listen to the child rather than question him or her directly
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling events
- Make a note of the disclosure as soon as possible after it has occurred,.

When the child's disclosure is complete (and if there is the opportunity to do so and it is felt to be appropriate):

- Tell the child you are sorry about what has happened, but you are pleased s/he was able to tell you

- Tell the child that you will not be able to keep secret what s/he has told you, but that you will only tell people who will do everything they can to help and that you will tell him/her every time you have to share what s/he has said with someone new
- Make sure s/he understands that further investigations will probably take place
- Say that you understand that this has been a very difficult thing to talk about and that it may be difficult for a little while longer

As the guidance above indicates, staff must understand that it is not possible to give the child absolute guarantees of confidentiality, as this may make it impossible to protect him/her from further abuse. The child may be reassured that only people who need to know will be told. It is the child's right to have a clear and full explanation of what will happen, to the limit of his/her understanding.

Records of suspected child abuse must be kept in such a way that cumulative evidence of abuse may be discerned. Staff need to be aware that child abuse is often complex and sometimes can only be recognised in an historical context.

Following a disclosure, or where there is sufficient evidence of abuse, the CPLO will follow set procedures. S/he will inform other staff members of her actions on a need to know basis only. The person making the referral to the CPLO must leave it in the CPLO's hands and must not discuss it with anyone else or take any further action, other than possibly confirming with the CPLO (in private) that the necessary action has taken place.

It is important that any member of staff who receives a disclosure continues to be involved with the child, so that the child does not have to repeat the information too many times and to too many different people. To do so may cause undue distress. Also, it may be assumed that the child chose to disclose to the first person because it was someone in whom s/he had confidence. As far as school procedures are concerned, the child should be kept informed, whenever possible, of the action being taken on his/her behalf. The member of staff to whom the disclosure was made, or the CPLO, should ensure that the child feels confident in the continuing support offered and that s/he is aware of the duty of staff to share any further information given with those who will be able to protect him/her from further abuse.

The CPLO will always be available to provide support for any member of staff who is dealing with these sensitive and often painful issues.

PUPIL CONTACT

The Governors and staff of Milford School recognise that in educating the whole person, it is important to establish an ethos within the school where children learn to develop meaningful relationships with each other and with members of staff. They should also feel able to demonstrate and to receive demonstrations of affection, which may be physical or verbal in nature.

There is a potential danger, for staff and children alike, in operating such a style of working. It is therefore essential that all staff have a clear understanding of the ground rules needed for the protection of children as well as for their own professional safety.

To this end it is necessary to state the areas and degree of physical interaction.

Physical Contact/Touch

Children should be made aware that they do not have to accept physical or verbal demonstrations of affection from anyone if they do not feel comfortable with it. This would include attentions that may come from other children or adults who may or may not be members of staff. As a natural development of children's trust in the adults who care for them, however, we would expect interactions involving touch.

It is important that young children feel able to greet members of staff with a cuddle, if they want to. Occasionally a young child may give a member of staff a spontaneous kiss on the cheek and whilst this is not something we would encourage, it is important that staff react in a way that does not make the child feel rejected.

In a school like ours, it is equally important that staff show their affection or care for the children through appropriate touch. We believe that when young children are upset, they are comforted by physical contact such as an arm round the shoulder or someone holding their hand. Sometimes, when children are upset because of leaving their parents, or after a playground accident, they will feel comforted if they can sit close to their teacher or teaching assistant for a few minutes. An expression of joy may equally result in a spontaneous cuddle from a child to an adult or an adult to a child.

If there is a sound relationship between the adult and the child, then such actions are not only normal, but are essential to meeting the child's emotional needs. It is equally true, however, that where a child shows reluctance for any physical contact that is indicative of his/her emotional needs at the time. Staff should also respect those feelings.

In our school, it is unlikely that an adult and child would ever be alone together behind closed doors. If that is ever the case, it must be for safety reasons only (e.g. the child being in greater physical danger because of the door being open) and whilst another adult is being sought. If ever a child and adult are alone, physical expressions of affection must be avoided in case they are misconstrued.

All children should, as part of the school's Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education programme, begin to become aware of what is appropriate and inappropriate physical contact towards and from another person. At Key Stage 1, this is taught in very simple terms.

Private Conversations/Interviews/One to One Working Situations

Recent high profile, sad and shocking events have rightly led to a tightening up of procedures. These have as their priority the safeguarding of children, but when staff follow such procedures, they are also protected from unfair accusation.

There are some basic rules that must be adhered to both for the children's safety and the staff's protection:

- Avoid being completely alone in a room with a child*
- Do not develop special relationships with one child more than another either inside or outside of school
- Avoid establishing close personal relationships with the families of children in your care
- When you see children by chance outside of school, always keep to the same professional relationship you have in school
- Never make arrangements to meet any child outside of school under any circumstances and do not enter into correspondence by letter or e-mail

*Some of our 'time out' behaviour strategies involve children being left in the sole care of the head teacher or another available member of staff. Some individual educational testing is also carried out in one to one situations. Under such circumstances, it is therefore permissible for a member of staff to talk to a child in a room alone, but only with the door open. The safeguard for staff in these circumstances is to make a colleague aware that the child is to be seen privately and to give an indication of the proposed duration of the interview. This information should be transmitted with the child present, so that both parties are aware of the arrangements. When appropriate, a note of what has occurred should be made; otherwise colleagues should be given brief verbal feedback, so they are aware of the outcome of the situation.

It is desirable that children feel able to seek a private interview with staff, but in some exceptional cases this may not be possible. If, during such an interview, a child makes a disclosure that would constitute a child protection matter, it is important that the member of staff listens and follows the guidelines already given for such issues.

Supervision Whilst Changing Clothing for PE, Swimming and Other Activities

It is essential that staff provide adequate supervision for the children at all times and in an infant school this would include helping children of both sexes in changing for PE, swimming and drama sessions. It may also involve the changing of a child's clothes and helping him/her to wash when s/he has not reached the toilet in time!

Normally, when the children are changing for swimming, there is more than one adult present and because of the ages of our children there is rarely any need for privacy with regard to closing doors or curtains. When a child has "had an accident" on going to the toilet and is particularly messy and embarrassed as a result, however, it is often appropriate for the cleaning up to be done in private. There should always be two members of staff present when this occurs. Where possible the parents should then be advised of the situation.

In all of the above, it is essential that the adults involved have an awareness of the child's emotional state, needs and perceptions. Any member of the staff who feels uncomfortable with any of the permissible actions, with any child, has a responsibility to discuss this with the CPLO.