

# St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

## Child Protection Policy

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Children and young people have a right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment.

Any fears or worries that children and young people bring into the classroom should not go unnoticed by staff.

It is a guiding principle of the law and child protection procedures that the protection and welfare of the child must always be the first priority. The protection of children and young people is a shared community responsibility. Failure to provide an effective response can have serious consequences for the child. Teachers and other education staff are in a unique position to identify and help abused children.

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

**Aims:** We aim to provide a caring environment which will underpin the whole school aims and a curriculum where self-esteem can be nurtured and children empowered to protect themselves.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- (1) Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- (2) Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- (3) Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- (4) Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- (5) Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- ( i ) Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- (ii) Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- (iii) Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by Durham County Council Child Protection Team and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- (a) Ensure we have a designated teacher for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- (b) Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- (c) Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated teacher responsible for child protection and their role.
- (d) Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for child protection.
- (e) Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- (f) Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- (g) Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- (h) Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately .
- (i) Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- (j) Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- (k) Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School. Child Protection Policy. Dec 2009. M. Connor



## St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

### Child Protection Procedures

#### What do I do if I am worried that a child is being abused?

The designated child protection teacher in our school is the head teacher, **Monica Connor**.  
The designated governor is the chair, **Ann Hall**  
Date: Dec '09

I have concerns about a child's welfare

I

I discuss the situation with the child protection teacher - the Headteacher

I

I still have concerns

I

The headteacher will refer the case to social services within 48 hrs.

#### What is abuse?

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

**Physical Harm** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

**Emotional Abuse** - is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless  
St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School. Child Protection Policy. Dec 2009. M. Connor

or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or exploitation or corruption of children.

**Sexual Abuse** – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect** – is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic needs.

### **What to do?**

- \* If you suspect that a child is being abused or is likely to suffer significant harm you **MUST** go and talk to the designated teacher. (Also see Annex A "What to do if a child tells you they have been abused")
- \* She will ask you to keep a written log of your concerns. The learning mentor keeps a log of concerns in which you write down the incident or concern with the date.
- \* If the problems continue or if the incidents are of a severe nature the designated teacher, will approach social services within 48 hrs.
- \* You might be asked to provide support or further information but the designated teacher will help you.

### **Records**

Appropriate records and documentation will be kept securely and confidential on a need to know basis, separate from school records as outlined in the DfES circular 10.95 - Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service.

### **Checking adults in school**

All adults wanting to work in school will be required to fill in a form and have it checked by the CRB before they start. In certain circumstances the headteacher can agree to an adult working in school whilst their form is in the process of being checked provided that they are supervised at all times by another adult who has been checked.

**Allegations against members of staff**

If there is an allegation against a member of staff it will initially be dealt with by the Headteacher and the Chairman of Governors or in his or her absence the Vice Chairman of Governors. If the headteacher is accused then the Chairman of governors will deal with the complaint initially.

However, the allegations will be dealt with in line with the "Joint NEOST/Teacher Union Guidance on Education Staff and Child Protection: Staff Facing an Allegation of Abuse."

Further information can be obtained in the Department of Health booklet entitled "What to Do if You're Worried A Child is Being Abused."

Signed.....head teacher

Signed.....chair of governors

Date.....

Date of review.....