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# Child Protection Policy & Procedures

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## 1 Introduction

Manor House School and the Folly Nursery (hereafter referred to as the “School”) fully recognise their responsibilities for child protection. We strive to be a School where children are nurtured, valued, happy and safe. Any Child Protection concerns are dealt with very seriously. All concerns are logged and reviewed through the Child Protection Co-ordinators.

“Child Abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do, or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood.” (National Commission of Enquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse)

## 2 Our aims

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School. The main elements to our policy are:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting and pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children feel secure, learn, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Contributing to the well-being of children by securing their protection from abuse, in partnership with parents, enabling them to maximise their parental responsibility (except where to do so would be inconsistent with the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child).
- Working closely with other agencies as necessary (e.g. Social Services, Police, Healthcare Services, Educational Welfare Services, NSPCC).
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the different forms of abuse and the correct procedures to follow if abuse is suspected.

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:

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

## 3 Organisation and Management



We will follow the procedures set out by the local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF):

- Ensure we have three designated senior people (mix of male and female) for Child Protection and Safeguarding who have received appropriate training and support for this role (two senior school staff and one senior member of nursery staff)
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior persons responsible for child protection and their role.
- 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 senior person responsible for child protection.
- 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 Parents' Handbook.
- Notify social services if there is any unexplained absence of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure Safer 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 School their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The School will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The School ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The School Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the School. The School will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

#### **4 Monitoring and Evaluation**

This Policy will be monitored by regular review from Governors, the School Leadership Team and external agencies with which we work (ISI, etc.). It will be reviewed annually to ensure it is effective and in line with latest and best practice.



## 5 Every Child Matters

This Policy is fundamental to supporting the Every Child Matters outcomes and our School's vision and values:

### *Our vision is to nurture children who are...*

- *Confident yet humble in knowing they can and will succeed,*
- *Resilient when faced with challenges and setbacks,*
- *Happy in the world as it is, while able to see the world as it should be,*
- *Creative, open-minded and sensitive to the needs of others*

*...allowed to be children.*

### **Our Values:**

- *We treat others as we like to be treated and we do all we can to make ourselves and others happy*
- *We have high, positive expectations and always do our best*
- *We are honest and do the right thing even when it's difficult*
- *We take responsibility for our own thoughts, words and actions*
- *We all understand and support each other because we know how we feel affects how well we learn*
- *We believe children's intelligence comes in many forms and that our school environment supports and reinforces independence and creativity*
- *We promote independence in learning and celebrate achievement because we are all teachers and we are all learners*
- *We feel proud to be part of our school family and work together to achieve our goals -  
The school works because the team works*

### **Related documents:**

Child Protection Procedures (Appendix 1)

“What to do if you're worried a child is being abused” Teachernet publication, available from the School Office, any of the School's Designated Officers and online.

Further information is also available at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/child-protection-procedures>





The Designated Officer(s) will liaise with the School's Safeguarding Panel (Headmaster, Assistant Heads and Head of Nursery) and other relevant colleagues to achieve a consensus opinion about the requirements for intervention. Any incident will be assessed using Devon Local Authority's Assessment Framework (triangle diagram).



**The Social Care Assessment Teams will be contacted for advice and/or referral as required (01395 383054 or 01392 384574 or 01392 388725).**

- If the suspicion is unfounded, then the notes taken will be preserved and the member of staff asked to report back to the Designated Officer(s) if there is any further suspicion.
- If the suspicion was probably or definitely well founded, the child should receive protection. In this case the Designated Officer(s) will refer the matter to the relevant Social Services Department as soon as possible (certainly within 24 hours of the allegation or reported suspicion being made). In the case of a referral being made or advice being sought, one Designated Officer will become the lead professional in handling that case.
- If the suspicion was probably or possibly well founded but, while concern remains, there is nothing tangible with which to take the matter further then a close eye will be kept on the child, observing any changes in behaviour or any other abnormality. However, guidance may be sought from Social Services, notwithstanding the lack of tangible evidence.

Everybody should remember that this is a very serious matter. The consequences of a failure to take action or of taking precipitate action based on malicious or unwarranted allegations are severe.

Staff work to protect the welfare of children and we ask that parents are also vigilant. The School and its employees have a statutory duty to report concerns to Social Services relating to the welfare of the children in its care, should they feel a child is at risk from abuse.

All members of staff should be alert to the fact that any pupil may suffer abuse and recognise their responsibility towards the protection of that child. Child abuse may be defined as any situation where a child has been the victim of physical, emotional or sexual abuse on the part of the parents, guardians or any other person having legal custody of the child. On occasions a child may be the victim of such abuse from a person with no apparent link.

Diagnosing abuse is extremely difficult but there are a number of indicators that may alert staff and these may include:



- repeated minor injuries, e.g. bruises or cuts
- being dirty, smelly, poorly clothed or apparently underfed
- having lingering illnesses that are apparently unattended
- unexplained changes in behaviour
- deterioration in School work
- aggressive behaviour
- severe tantrums
- depression or withdrawal
- sexually explicit behaviour or showing inappropriate awareness
- reluctance to go home
- apparent reluctance to trust adults
- reversion to immature behaviour for age.
- inappropriate attention seeking behaviour

*No-one should jump to conclusions on noting one or more of these indicators and they should act only as a guide and perhaps a trigger towards awareness and closer observation.*

## **Types of abuse**

Child abuse most commonly falls into 4 main categories:

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### NEGLECT

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to; provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers), ensure access to appropriate medical care and treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.



## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It must be remembered that emotional abuse will also be an element of other forms of ill treatment of a child as well as occurring alone.

### **Appointing Staff**

The School will act in accordance with the law and follow the Safer Recruitment Guidelines in carrying out thorough checks on the suitability of all staff prior to appointment for the responsibilities they are to undertake. The School will confirm that a prospective employee is not listed as 'a person unsuited to working with either children or young persons'. Checks will be made through the Criminal Records Bureau.

### **Alleged child abuse by a member of staff**

If there is cause for a member of staff to be formally investigated for an alleged act of abuse, the member of staff will be suspended from duty. In cases where abuse is proved to have occurred, the member of staff may face prosecution, as well as formal disciplinary proceedings. The GTCE will also be informed where appropriate and the School is aware of its statutory obligation to report instances of misconduct by teachers (Regulation 7 of the Education [Particulars of Independent Schools] Regulations 1982).

***Any questions regarding and Safeguarding procedures or issues must be raised with either Helen Freeman, Linda Scott or Adam Gibson as a priority.***