

GOSDEN HOUSE SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

(Having regard for UNCRC Articles 34, 36, 39)

This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Ratified on: **12 July 2011**

Review date: **July 2012**

Introduction

This policy has been developed to outline the principles and procedures that must be followed to protect children from abuse. ¹We believe the welfare of the child is paramount (children Act 1989). At Gosden House we aim to provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties believing that they will be effectively listened to. This applies to both our day children and those for whom a residential experience is provided.

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 and support those children who are suffering harm.

In recognition that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection we will:

- 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
- Ensure 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 school brochure.
- Include opportunities across the curriculum, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- Promote the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

¹Gosden House School follows the DCFS guidance under S157 and 175 Education Act 2002, laid out in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" that came into force January 2007. We also follow HM Government advice in "Working Together to Safeguard Children" March 2010 and Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Child Protection Procedures available on line at www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding and work in line with the National Minimum Care Standards for Residential Special Schools 2002. These documents can all be found in the school First Aid room.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Child Protection Procedures (Available on line).
- Health and Safety Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Conduct Policy
- Self-Injury Policy
- Intimate Care Guidelines
- E – Safety Policy

Aims of this Policy

- To protect children from abuse
- To ensure staff² understand the different types of abuse³
- To raise awareness of staff regarding the signs of abuse.
- To ensure staff are aware of their own responsibilities regarding the child protection procedures
- To ensure staff are aware of the role of the Child Protection Liaison Officer
- To recognise the dilemmas of confidentiality and offer advice
- To provide ongoing training for staff and include discussion of child protection at induction for new staff
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and to ensure we contribute to assessments of need and support packages as appropriate
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability including verification of their identity, qualifications and an enhanced CRB check and a single central record is kept for audit⁴
- To provide support for both staff who report and pupils who have disclosed, or have been recognised as suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff Members

All staff members have a responsibility to be aware of the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected child abuse. Staff in regular contact with pupils are well placed to notice signs of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, behavioural change or failure to develop as expected. The child's welfare is our paramount concern.

- We have two designated Child Protection Liaison Officers (CPLO) who have attended Child Protection Foundation Training. The Head of Care has also attended Foundation Training. All have received update training.
- Members of the Senior Management Team act in the CPLO's absence
- All members of staff are provided with opportunities to receive training to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- If we have a safeguarding concern about a child we will share this with parents/carers. However, if doing so may put the child at risk of significant or further harm, we will seek advice from Duty Manager, Surrey Contact Centre.

¹Wherever the word "staff" is used it covers ALL staff on site including ancillary and supply staff.

²See appendix A

³Guidance regarding CRB checks is currently in 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' – January 2007

- We will ensure that our selection and recruitment of staff includes checks for their suitability with the Criminal Records Bureau etc as above
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our Child Protection Policy and be made aware of the Safeguarding Statement
- Staff will be aware that the “Working Together to Safeguard children” guidance; “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education” and other relevant documents are available for reference in the medical room. The “Surrey Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedure Manual” is accessed via the Surrey County Council website and is updated centrally as required.

Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO)

The designated CPLOs for Gosden House are the Headteacher, Jon David and the Home/School Link Social Worker, Annie Welch. The CPLOs are responsible for:-

- Ensuring Child Protection procedures are in place and updated as appropriate
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of both the SSCB Protection Procedures and the School Policy
- Being available to provide advice/support to staff and for confidential discussions about concerns.
- Referring a child if there are safeguarding concerns to the Contact Centre Children’s Team and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Telephone referrals should be followed up in writing following advice from Social Care.
- Being available to provide support to pupils.
- Liaising with the Headteacher and keep him informed regarding child protection issues.
- Aiming to work in partnership with parents/carers by attempting to discuss any concerns with them wherever possible. Permission should be sought before discussing a referral about them with other agencies unless this process may in itself place a child at risk of significant harm or prejudice a criminal investigation. Social Care advice must be sought on this issue.
- Liaising with Social Care and other professionals in accordance with Surrey procedures including updating the Standard 33 Residential Support Manager.
- Keeping records of any concerns/referrals and ongoing Child Protection issues confidentially, securely and separate from pupil records until the child’s 35th birthday.
- Ensuring that an indication of the existence of an additional confidential file is marked on the pupil records.
- Monitoring the attendance of pupils on a Child Protection Plan, who if they are absent without explanation for 2 days are referred to the Key Worker.
- Co-ordinating the attendance of staff at Case Conferences, Core Groups, Multi- Agency Planning Meetings and contributing to assessments or providing reports and where possible sharing reports with parents/carers.
- Organising Child Protection training for school staff at Induction and ensuring refresher training and other pertinent training is provided at least every 3 years.
- Ensuring that where there has been Child Protection concerns appropriate information is copied on confidentially to a pupil’s new school/FE college.
- Preparing the Annual Governors Report reviewing arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and support the implementation of any actions planned from the review.

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. The school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. We will support pupils by:-

- Encouraging self esteem and assertiveness through the curriculum as well as through our relationship whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring safe and positive environment within the school and on the residential units.
- Working together with other support services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying the Contact Centre/Social Care if there is a significant concern.

Handling Disclosures

If a young person feels supported they may confide in staff about having suffered some form of abuse. **It is not your responsibility to decide if an allegation is true or not.** In such situations the following guidelines may be helpful:-

DO:

- Find somewhere quiet to talk as soon as possible.
- Stay calm and reassuring. Take it seriously.
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what you are told a secret.
- Listen to and believe what the pupil tells you – tell them that, whatever the circumstances, they are not to blame.
- Tell the pupil you are pleased he/she has decided to tell someone and that this was the right thing to do.
- Let the pupil know you understand how difficult it is to talk about such experiences and explain what will happen next.
- Make a note on the Expression of Concern Form of the discussion in the child's words. Sign and date the record. Ensure this is shared with a designated CPLO/their Deputy as soon as possible.
- Obvious signs of physical injury should be recorded using skin maps and passed to the CPLO as above.

DON'T:

- Press for details – some cases of abuse may need further investigation. It is better for the pupil not to have to repeat details unnecessarily.
- Ask leading questions.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Jump to conclusions
- Speculate or accuse anybody.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The Headteacher/CPLO 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 the child's safety or wellbeing.

Supporting Staff

- We recognise that staff working at Gosden House who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be at risk of harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- An opportunity will be provided to talk through their anxieties with a CPLO and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations Against Staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. In cases where a child may regularly need help with their personal care it is advisable for general permission to be sought from the parents (see Guidelines for Intimate Care).

Pupils are made aware of the complaints procedure and have both Child Line and a Care Governor who can be approached by telephone if they do not wish to speak to staff in school about their worries or concerns. Pupils are also made aware of the Pictorial Worries and Complaints Poster and that complaints can be made to the Residential Service Manager and the Care Standards Inspectors.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children. If an allegation is made by a pupil against a member of staff, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher (see Whistleblowing Policy).

The school will follow the SSCB Procedures for managing allegations against staff. On all such occasions the Headteacher will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Education Officer or in his/her absence the Residential Service Manager as we are a Residential Special School.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as above, without notifying the Headteacher first.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, if they exist, about unacceptable or inappropriate practice or behaviour, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. They should speak in the first instance, to their line manager, the Headteacher or the CPLO.

Appendix A

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

Taken from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Department of Health, Home Office and DfEE (1999)

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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy'.

Emotional Abuse

'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 or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age of developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone'.

Sexual Abuse

'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 non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs'.

Bullying

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It can take place between children, adults and young people, face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber-bullying methods'.