



## Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

### VISION

At Holy Trinity we welcome you to an exciting world of learning, discovery and friendship. We are passionate about nurturing every child, helping them to find and develop their own talents and be the best that they possibly can. Children will learn within a Christian community, surrounded by support, kindness, respect and fun; and will leave with fantastic memories to cherish forever.

### Pupils' Voice

If children are being hurt at home and coming to school with bruises, the school should talk to their parents and get some help.

Policy drafted by:	Safeguarding & Behaviour Committee
Date:	Spring 2008
Staff meeting:	
Pupil Behaviour & Protection Cmte:	Spring '08
Governing body agreement:	Spring '08
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## Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

### **Introduction:**

In line with our Christian values we nurture a positive school ethos through teaching and pastoral support. We are concerned about the welfare and potential of all members of the school community and attempt to create an environment in which the children feel 'safe, secure and happy'. Through our work as a Healthy School we seek to maintain a culture and ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and know that they are listened to.

### **Statutory framework:**

The 'Children Act (2004)' is the legislative backdrop to *Every Child Matters* and requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Local Director of Children's Services.

Schools are expected to create and maintain a safe learning environment for children and to identify situations where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate. Schools can also contribute through the curriculum by developing children's understanding, awareness and resilience.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children, A Guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of Children' (HM Government, April 2006) places the following responsibilities on all schools:

- Creating a safe learning environment, having effective arrangements in place to address issues including child protection, pupil health and safety, and bullying as well as first aid, school security and measures to deal with substance abuse and the health needs of pupils with medical conditions.
- A designated teacher should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies.
- Staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible neglect or abuse at an early stage and should know who to report these to. Staff with designated responsibility for child protection should receive appropriate training. Staff should not themselves investigate possible abuse or neglect but have a key role to play in referring concerns about those issues to children's social care.
- Where a child is the subject of an inter-agency child protection plan, the school should be involved in the preparation of the plan and its responsibilities in contributing to actions to safeguard the child should be clearly identified.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 introduced a new vetting and barring scheme for all those working with children and young people

from 2008. In 2007 the head teacher and chair of governors, and in 2009 the vice-chair undertook training in safer recruitment and they will ensure that the new regulations are followed. The school will also pay due regard to the new consolidated guidance document, "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education", which came into force in January 2007.

- At Holy Trinity we are committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings.

Achieving this objective requires systems designed to:

- prevent unsuitable people working with children and young people;
- promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice;
- identify instances in which there are grounds for concern about a child's welfare, and initiate or take appropriate action to keep them safe; and
- contribute to effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children and young people.

See appendix: Recruitment and Selection Checklist taken from Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education document.

There will be regular training to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse; and ensure effective communication between all staff as appropriate when dealing with child protection issues. This will include procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse.

We also recognise and accept our responsibilities within the framework of the Health and Safety Policy of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to ensure the physical health and safety of children in-school and off-site visits. This is upheld in our Health and Safety Policy and its specified procedures and implementation.

Parents will be made aware of the school Child Protection Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigation agencies in the interests of the child. Holy Trinity CE Primary School will inform parents of the policy through the school's prospectus and website.

### **The Designated Teacher:**

The designated teacher for child protection is the head teacher, Penny Cox. There is also a designated governor for child protection. The duties of these individuals include;

Ensuring that all staff are aware of child protection procedures by:

- arranging full day CP framework training once every three years;
- arranging a yearly training session on identification of signs of abuse;
- keeping a log of this, and any additional training;
- providing regular half-termly support to NQTs;
- briefing new staff as to their duties.

Initiating and monitoring referrals by:

- deciding whether to take further action about specific concerns (for example: refer to social services or other units);
- follow up referrals, if no action has been taken after a period of seven days;
- ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'strictly confidential';
- liaise with social service teams over suspected cases of abuse;
- submit reports to, and join the class teacher at the child protection conferences;
- ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as 'at risk';
- develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services.

In addition they should:

- provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.
- build child protection elements into their own CPD plan ensuring refresher training is taken at least at two yearly intervals.

### **When to be concerned:**

Staff should be concerned about a pupil if he or she:

- has an injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's injuries;
- regularly has unexplained injuries;
- frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given);
- confused or conflicting explanations are given on how injuries were sustained;
- exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude;
- indulges in sexual behaviour which is usually explicit and/or inappropriate to his/her age;
- has dramatic changes in weight;
- discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed;
- has patterns of unexplained, or poorly explained absence from school;
- is reluctant to get changed in front of others when getting ready for PE;
- shows signs of neglect; such as poor hygiene, stealing of food, unwashed uniform.

### **Dealing with a disclosure:**

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief;
- believe what is being said;
- allow the child to talk freely;
- reassure the child but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- not promise confidentiality - it might be necessary to refer to social services;

- reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault;
- stress that it was the right thing to tell;
- listen, rather than ask direct questions;
- not criticise the alleged perpetrator;
- explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

### **Record keeping:**

When a pupil has made a disclosure the member of staff should:

- make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation;
- pass these notes and concerns to the designated child protection teacher as soon as possible;
- not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court;
- record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child;
- draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury;
- record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

### **Support for staff receiving a disclosure:**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the head teacher.

### **Allegations involving school staff:**

If a child, parent, makes a complaint against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the head teacher. This policy applies when the complaint is that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been harmed by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the head teacher. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation. When an investigation of an allegation is made, it should be conducted in accordance with established good practice. Any formal interview will be undertaken in the presence of at least two others and a contemporaneous written record of the interview will be maintained.

(If the concerns are about the head teacher, the head of education welfare service must be contacted, tel: 020 8893 3923 and the chair of governors notified.)

The head teacher will investigate the allegation itself, and will take written or detailed statements. Records of allegations will include a comprehensive summary

of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached. This information will be kept on the staff member's confidential personnel file, and a copy will be given to the staff member. The record will be kept by the school until the staff member has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer.

The school will keep the person who is the subject of the allegations informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. If the person is suspended, the school will keep the individual informed about developments at school. If the person is a member of a union or professional association s/he will be advised to contact that body at the outset.

### **Procedure for dealing with an allegation**

The head teacher will investigate the allegation itself, and will take written or detailed statements as described above.

The head teacher will inform a local authority designated officer of any allegations (this means the school's education welfare officer or the head of the education welfare service). If appropriate, this person will then consult police and social services. Alternatively the head teacher may choose to directly inform a member of the initial response team from the social services – 020 8891 7963.)

If the head teacher and/or local authority designated officer decide that the allegation warrants further action through child protection procedures he/she must make a referral direct to the social services team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence it will be necessary to contact social services before informing the subject of the allegation. If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to social services the head teacher will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. They should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.

### **Use of force**

Teachers and other school staff may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour, under s550A of the Education Act 1996. At Holy Trinity, force may only be used by teachers who have received relevant and recent training, except in exceptional circumstances when they are not available. The trained teachers are Penny Cox and Brenda Hills, and the school tries to ensure that one of them is on school premises at all times. All staff have had basic awareness training, and in an emergency situation should comply with national guidance as to how force may be used.

**Bullying**

Holy Trinity CE Primary School is strongly opposed to bullying in school and works to prevent it where possible. The school's policy is outlined in the 'Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy'.