

Policy Document



Falmer High School

Policy	Child Protection
Approved	
Date for revision	
Reviewed by	Quality & Standards Committee

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

The purpose of the whole-school child protection policy is to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. This policy makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures in order that child protection referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the student.

Rationale

Falmer High School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support students in school. 'Because of their day-to-day contact with individual children during school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.'(Working Together -Under the Children Act, 1989)

Aims

At Falmer High School we recognise that for children, self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult help prevent the chances of their being abused. Our school will therefore aim to:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse
- include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills
- ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

Framework

Falmer High School does not operate in isolation. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The school adopts the appropriate procedures as set out by the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) which is responsible for the development of the appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice.

Roles and Responsibilities.

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children. There are, however, key people within school and the LEA who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

The designated teacher for child protection, the named person, is Norma Smith. An Assistant Headteacher, Sophia Wilson, assumes responsibility as the named person in the absence of the Deputy Headteacher. In the absence of both the above, the designated person is Sue Shaw.

The named governor, Stephen Berry, will attend training and report back to the governing body curriculum sub-committee. Governors will not be given details relating to specific child protection cases as these must be kept confidential.

Procedures

We will follow the procedures set out in the document produced by the ACPC Child Protection Procedures.

Staff will be kept informed about child protection procedures by a training session at the beginning of each autumn term and reminders at the start of the Easter and Summer terms.

If any member of staff suspects that a child is being neglected or has been abused, emotionally, physically or sexually or is at risk of being abused s/he must **immediately inform the designated teacher**. Evidence of abuse can include:

Physical Abuse: non accidental injuries, bruising, wounding burns, fractures – indicators include:

- obvious signs of injury;
- injuries which are unusual or unexplained;
- injuries, which while explained are frequent.

Neglect: the chronic inattention to basic needs - indicators include:

- dirty, unkempt appearance;
- developmental delay;
- low self esteem;
- hunger.

Sexual abuse: the involvement of children or young people in sexual activity, this includes the abuse of a position of trust by an adult with professional responsibility to a child - indicators include:

- physical difficulties such as wetting or soiling;
- extreme variations in behaviour;
- sexualised language, behaviour of play;
- indirect disclosure through play, drawing or written work.

Emotional Abuse or neglect: persistent emotional ill treatment such as the extreme denial of love, affection or approval - indicators include:

- low self esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety;
- attention seeking behaviours;
- emotional developmental delay.

Sometimes children and young people who are suffering abuse choose a trusted adult to tell.

If a child discloses abuse in school, the person hearing the disclosure should:

- listen, allowing the child to recall freely;
- reassure the child that they are believed;
- make notes as soon as possible, recording as accurately as possible the words used by the child;

- be clear with the child that the information will have to be passed on and that there are people who will be able to help;
- refer to the designated person
- do not ask the child questions. (Leave this to social workers/police).

The designated teacher will make the appropriate contacts with the child concerned, the parents, the Child Protection Register, Social Services and, if necessary, the police.

Training and Support

Our school will ensure that the named person and the nominated governor for child protection attend training relevant to their role.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

All information received in connection with child protection matters should be treated confidentially. However, **staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a child as this may not be in the child's best interests.**

Information relating to a child about whom there are concerns should be given to the named person who will take appropriate action in line with the set procedures.

Records and Monitoring

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice.

Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

In the case of serious concerns, **clear notes must be taken** of times, dates, concerns and, in the case of the child disclosing information, of what was actually said and the notes should then immediately be passed on to the named person.

The named person will keep confidential records of referral information and feedback from agencies involved with individual cases. This information is kept secure and separate from other school records. Individual teachers are made aware of any children at risk on a need to know basis. They are also made aware of the confidentiality of this information.

If a child transfers or leaves, the school to which they are transferring is contacted and information is passed on to the named person to alert them to the need to monitor.

Child Protection Conferences

A child protection conference is called when there are concerns regarding the welfare of a child. Information on who chairs and who attends is available in the ACPC procedure book. The named person or the Head of Year will either attend the case conference or send in a written report.

Safe School, Safe Staff

All staff have a duty of care with regard to all children in school which may include providing emotional support in certain circumstances. Physical restraint is used by staff as a last resort to protect the child, themselves or others from harm. When working one to one with a student, staff should make a colleague aware of the circumstances.

This school takes child protection seriously and will endeavour to keep child protection issues in mind throughout the recruitment process. All adults who work in school undergo a Criminal Record Bureau

check. On site contractors will be issued with relevant child protection information and made aware of our expectations of their conduct whilst on site.

Supporting students at risk

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider suspension or exclusion from school.

It is vital to adopt a consistent approach which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays to ensure the appropriate support. It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Link to other policies.

Action to be taken where a member of staff is suspected of child abuse.

- In the event that an employee suspects that a member of staff is abusing a student, in school or elsewhere, a report should be made in strict confidence to the Headteacher. The Headteacher should immediately inform the Lead Officer for Child Protection who shall inform the relevant social work office. Arrangements for investigation shall commence within the school prior to these arrangements being made.
- If the Headteacher is suspected of improper conduct, the employee concerned should make his/her report directly to the Lead Officer for Child Protection at Brighton and Hove.
- Any staff disclosing information regarding inappropriate behaviour by colleagues will be listened to and supported.
- Parents of a child allegedly abused by a member of staff or other adult in the school will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.
- Any member of staff facing investigation into an allegation of abuse will be subject to the procedures laid down by the joint Department for Education and Skills / National Employers Organisation for School Teachers (DfES/NEOST) guidance and will be offered appropriate access to professional and personal support networks, and, will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.

Child Protection Register: 01273 295999 during working hours
01273 295650 out of hours
Social Services: 01273 296000
Fax:01273 296044
Emergency Duty Service 07699 391462
Police 01273 665539

Special Circumstances.

Images of children, such as recording school events and school brochures.

We believe that images of children are an important record of school life and achievements. We have a procedure for the use of images of children which is reinforced at school events. This procedure is reviewed annually and cross checked with the guidance on safeguarding children.

December 2004. Revised July 2006 in line with guidance from Brighton and Hove.

Links to other policies

All school policies are written with due regard to the safety and welfare of all students and staff. This policy should be considered alongside other related ones such as: Anti bullying, attendance, curriculum, equalities, health and safety, rewards and behaviour, sex and relationships, special educational needs and all risk assessments.

Special Circumstances

Recruitment – Procedures are in place to ensure suitable staff are appointed and references and CRM checks are followed up.

Trips and Visits

Arrangements for trips and visits ensure students' safety.