



Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Aldwickbury School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All pupils should feel safe and protected from harm whether it occurs through abuse, neglect, accident, injury or bullying. It is also recognised that all staff should be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, and know to whom they should report concerns or suspicions. The above is achieved by:

- Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse whether it should come from outside or within the school
- Support to, and monitoring of pupils, who have been abused.

This policy applies to all teaching and support staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school. Ancillary staff, administrative staff, other pupils, as well as teachers, can be the first point of disclosure for a child. It is designed to protect all pupils at Aldwickbury, including those in EYFS for whom the lead practitioner is also one of the Deputy Designated Senior Persons (Mrs Judy James).

This Child Protection Policy forms part of a suite of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school and should be read in conjunction with the relevant documentation.

Statutory Framework

In order to protect children from harm the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2004

Education Act (2002), section 175

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures (2007)

DfES guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006)

HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006)

Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.

- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care Services.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

Personnel and Responsibilities

Designated Senior Person: Mr Vernon Hales, Headmaster.

Role of the Designated Senior Person

- Ensure that he/she receives refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep his or her knowledge and skills up to date
- Ensure that all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively and that this is kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals
- Ensure that newly appointed staff receive a child protection induction
- Ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection
- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
- Ensure that the Chairman of Governors is kept fully informed of any concerns
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. refer to Children, Schools and Families)
- Liaise with CSF social care teams over suspected cases of child abuse
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential' and that these records are passed securely should the child transfer to a new provision

Deputy Designated Senior Persons: Mr C.G. Minogue or Mrs J. James

Designated Governor for Child Protection: Mr J. Cavanagh

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children at Aldwickbury. In particular the Governing Body oversees the following:

- Child protection policy and procedures
- Safe recruitment procedures
- Appointment of a DSP who is a senior member of school leadership team
- Relevant child protection training for school staff/volunteers is attended

- Safe management of allegations
- Deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- A member of the Governing Body is nominated to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Head Teacher
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually and information provided to the local authority about them and about how the above duties have been discharged

Responsibility of Staff

It is the responsibility of all adults in the school to:

- Be familiar and work with the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedure
- Know the identity of the Designated Person, the Deputy Designated Persons and the Governor with responsibility for Child Protection
- Know how to record disclosures or concerns and/or pass them on to the Designated Persons as detailed in this policy
- Attend training sessions as directed

A full list of adults to whom the boys can turn is provided on the 'If You Need to Talk' poster. This includes the Independent Listener, Viv Lawman, who satisfies the need for a suitably qualified adult outside of the school staff for a boy to talk to. In most cases it is hoped that a boy would speak to his Tutor over any concerns.

Prevention

Aldwickbury School recognises that high esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. The school will:

- Seek to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure children know that they can approach any adult in the school whom they wish if they are worried or in difficulty
- Practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children (see Recruitment Policy)
- Ensure that children have access to an independent listener
- Include in both academic and pastoral activities an opportunity for the children to become equipped with the skills needed to remain safe from harm and to give them the confidence to seek help and know where to go for help if they perceive a need
- Have procedures in place for dealing with cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Ensure that (where possible and appropriate) adults employed by another organisation who are working with Aldwickbury pupils on another site are covered by the relevant and up to date Child Protection checks.

Procedures

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the Designated Senior Person immediately.

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations. **(Pro-forma is available in Appendix 1).**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of abuse, the Designated Person (or his deputy) will refer the pupil to the Social Care Services within 24 hours. Referral should be by telephone and a note of what was said and to whom must be kept by the referrer, giving the time and date of the referral.

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the school has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan (formerly referred to as the Child Protection Register) and a written record will be kept.

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the Designated Senior Person will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Senior Person at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file.

When to be Concerned

All staff should be aware that the main categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

All staff should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm – **see Appendix 2 for details.**

Generally, in an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s or other household members e.g. siblings or others outside of the home
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)
- Display insufficient sense of 'boundaries', lack stranger awareness
- Appear wary of adults and display 'frozen watchfulness'

In very rare circumstances (for this age group and type of school) the abuser could be another child. If this is suspected then the designated senior person should be informed in the normal fashion.

Dealing with a Disclosure

If a child 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
- Accept 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 Children Schools and Families
- 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
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Pass information to the Designated Senior Person without delay

For more advice on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse, see **Appendix 3**.

Golden Rules

- Even if you are worried but have no proof, talk it over with the Headmaster.
- If the Headmaster, as Designated Person, is unavailable then contact one of the Deputy Designated Persons.
- Do not delay and do not gossip.
- Take seriously what a child tells you and act on it.

Allegations Involving School Staff

Whenever it is alleged that a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child
- Behaved toward a child in a way which indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the Designated Senior Person.

If any member of staff has reason to suspect that another member of staff may have abused a child at the school, or elsewhere, they must immediately inform the Designated Senior Person.

They should also make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed on to the Designated Senior Person (see section on record keeping).

If the concerns are about the Designated Senior Person, then the allegation should be passed to one of the Deputy Designated Senior Persons who will contact the Chairman of Governor's. The Chairman of Governors at Aldwickbury is:

Mr Stuart Westley. Contact Number: 01438840730

The Designated Senior Person will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but he will assess whether it is necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (07920 283106 or 07995 288271)

If it is decided that the allegation warrants further action through Child Protection Procedures the Designated Senior Person will immediately (within 24 hours) make a referral to CSF Client Services (03001234043 or 01438 737511) so that the allegation can be investigated in accordance with Section 10 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures .

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Children Schools and Families, the Head Teacher and Local Authority Designated Officer will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

The Head Teacher should, as soon as possible, **following briefing** from the Local Authority Designated Officer inform the subject of the allegation.

If urgent medical assistance is needed, it must be sought as for any other child. In doing so, however, the member of staff concerned must tell the doctor or hospital that it is believed that the child has been abused. Where a medical examination is deemed necessary, the parents should be informed and invited to attend, unless the allegation concerns a member of the child's household. However, the Designated Person (or his deputy) may proceed without the parents if they cannot attend or be contacted.

Further advice may be obtained from Ofsted:

Ofsted Midlands
Building C
Cumberland Place
Nottingham
NG1 6HJ
Tel: 08456 404040

Whistleblowing

- At Aldwickbury, 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, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.
- Staff who report suspicions or make an allegation are immune from retribution or disciplinary action arising from 'whistle blowing' in good faith.

Supporting Staff

- The school recognises that staff working at Aldwickbury who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.
- Staff are also given advice on how to avoid the kinds of compromising situations which may lead to an allegation of abuse. This advice is given as part of the regular training undertaken in accordance with regulatory requirements but also to new staff as part of the induction process.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.
- The Designated Senior Person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. Other staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- 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.

Record Keeping

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation (**use pro-forma in Appendix 1**)
- 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

All records need to be given to the Designated Senior Person promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

Review Dates

Headmaster
September 2004

Reviewed
September 2006

Reviewed
September 2008

Reviewed
September 2009

Appendix 1:RECORD OF CONCERN

Child's Name :			
Child's DOB :			
Male/Female :	Ethnic Origin :	Disability Y/N :	Religion :
Male			
Date and Time of Concern :			
Your Account of the Concern : (what was said, observed, reported and by whom)			
Additional Information : (your opinion, context of concern/disclosure)			
Your Response : (what did you do/say following the concern)			
Your Name :			
Your Signature :			
Your Position in School :			
Date and Time of this Recording :			
Action and Response of DSP / HT			
Name:Date:.....			

APPENDIX 2 – Indicators of possible significant harm

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Injuries not typical of accidental injury
- Frequent injuries even with apparently reasonable explanations
- Improbable or conflicting explanations for injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away
- Frequently absent from school

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

Probably the most difficult type of abuse to recognise. An emotionally abused child is often withdrawn, introverted and depressed.

- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food or clothes
- Continual self depreciation
- Air of detachment – ‘don’t care’ attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including over-eating or lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Demonstrate sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
- Wetting or other regressive behaviours e.g. thumb sucking
- Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities
- Be reluctant to undress for PE
- Become fearful of, or refuse to see, certain adults for no apparent reason; show dislike of a particular baby-sitter, relative or other adult
- Draw sexually explicit pictures
- Urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Soreness or bleeding in the throat
- Chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches
- Take over the parental role at home; seem old beyond their years
- Develop eating disorders, such as anorexia or bulimia
- Depression, suicidal thoughts
- Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
- Physical discomfort
- Use drugs or drink to excess
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Memory loss
- Frequent running away
- Restricted social activities
- Find excuses not to go home or to a particular place
- Have recurring nightmares/be afraid of the dark
- Be unable to concentrate; seem to be in a world of their own
- Have a 'friend who has a problem' and then tell about the abuse of the friend
- Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant
- Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
- Outbursts of anger or irritability
- Unexplained sums of money
- Act in a sexually inappropriate/harmful or seductive way towards others

Possible Signs of Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing, clothing in a poor state of repair
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Constant tiredness
- Emaciation
- Destructive tendencies.

- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Chronic running away
- Scavenging for food or clothes

In addition to all the above signs a child may disclose an experience in which he/she may have been harmed, or there may be any other cause to believe that a child may be suffering harm.

APPENDIX 3: Guidance on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse:

GENERAL POINTS	DON'T SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound) • Keep calm • Look at the child directly • Be honest • Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality • Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse • Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell • Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen. <p>HELPFUL THINGS YOU MAY SAY OR SHOW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand what you are saying • Thank you for telling me • It's not your fault • I will help you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why didn't you tell anyone before? • I can't believe it! • Are you sure this is true? • Why? How? When? Who? Where? • Never make false promises • Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else". <p>CONCLUDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance • Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens. • Contact the appropriate senior member of staff or agency. • Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.