

# **Beech House School**

## **Child Protection Policy**

### Child Protection Policy for Beech House School

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Beech House School fully recognises the contribution it makes to child protection.  
There are three main elements to our policy.
  - (a) Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils.
  - (b) Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. Due to our day to day contact with children school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.
  - (c) Support to pupils who may have been abused.
- 1.2 Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school. Learning support assistants, supervisors, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.
- 1.3 The child protection policy and procedures are in accordance with Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board and Child Protection Procedures.
- 1.4 The school operates safe recruitment procedures.
- 1.5 The School has adopted the DCSF 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings'.

## 2.0 PREVENTION

- 2.1 We recognize that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

The school will therefore:

- (a) Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- (b) Ensure children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- (c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSD, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to who to turn for help.
- (d) 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.

## 3.0 PROCEDURES

- 3.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Rochdale Area Child Protection Committee document entitled '*Child Protection Procedures*'. Part of one of the procedures specific to '*dealing with your concerns*' is widely available as an immediate and convenient reference.

3.2 The school will:

- (a) Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff who has undertaken relevant training, to standards set by the ACPC. Refresher training is carried out at 2 yearly intervals.
- (b) Recognise the role of the designated teacher(s) and arrange support and training.
- (c) Ensure every member of staff knows –
  - The name of the designated person(s) and his / her role
  - That they have individual responsibility for referring to child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the school's policy documents.

- Where the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Board Child Protection Policy procedures are located.
  - Their responsibilities on child protection from the first page are kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals.
- (d) Ensure that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may tell of abuse.
- (e) Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection.
- (f) Provide training for all staff so that they know
- (i) Their personal responsibility
  - (ii) The relevant procedures
  - (iii) The guidance for safer working practice
  - (iv) The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
  - (v) How to support a child who tells of abuse
- (g) Notify the local Social Services team and / or the Education Welfare Services if:
- It should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register either for a fixed term or permanently.
  - If there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend)..
- (h) Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences.
- (i) Keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately.
- (j) Ensure all records are kept secure and in a locked location.
- (k) Adhere to the procedures set out in the *Education Department's Policy and Procedure* document when an allegation is made against a member of staff. This process is managed by the Principal.
- (l) Ensure that all applicants for vacant posts are appointed according to the School's recruitment policy.

- (m) Any deficiencies or weakness in regard to child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
- (n) The Proprietor undertakes an annual review of the school policies and procedures relating to safeguarding children.

#### **4.0 SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

- 4.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self blame.
- 4.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when children at school their behavior may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 4.3 The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:
  - (a) The content of the curriculum to encourage self esteem and self motivation (see section 2).
  - (b) The school ethos which:
    - (i) Promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment.
    - (ii) Gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2)
  - (c) The school's behavior policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on the behavior of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behavior is unacceptable but he / she is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse that has occurred.
  - (d) Liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, the Educational Psychology Service and the Education Welfare Service.
  - (e) Keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of concern.

4.4 When a pupil on a child protection register leaves we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform the relevant Social Services Team.

4.5 Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in the *Policy Document* file.

4.6 Physical intervention

Our policy on physical intervention is set out in the *Policy Document* file.

4.7 Children with statements of special educational needs

We recognize that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

## **Appendix**

### **Possible signs of physical abuse**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Improbable explanation for injuries.
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to.
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive.
- Shrinking from physical contact.
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted.
- Fear of undressing.
- Fear of medical help.
- Aggression / bullying.
- Over compliant behaviour or a 'watchful attitude'.
- Running away.
- Significant changes in behavior without explanation.
- Deterioration in work.
- Unexplained pattern of absence which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries.

### **Possible signs of neglect**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Constant tiredness
- (Development delay)
- (Failure to thrive)

### **Possible signs of emotional abuse**

- Continual self-depreciation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing / scrounging
- Drug / solvent abuse
- Neurotic behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb sucking and so on.
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude

- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention seeking behaviour
- Eating problem, including over eating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

### **Possible signs of sexual abuse**

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
- Scratches. Abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Pregnancy – particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identity of the father
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown, for example, in drawings, vocabulary, games and so on.
- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends

### **Possible signs in older children**

- Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
- Self injury, self destructive behavior, suicide attempts
- Eating disorders
- Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
- Over compliant behavior
- Sleep disturbance
- Unexplained gifts of money
- Depression
- Changes in behavior