



Mill Lane Primary School Safeguarding Policy January 2017

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REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

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1.0 Relevant Documentation

When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents which work alongside this Child Protection Policy:

1. Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Procedures accessed at www.teescpp.org.uk
2. HM Government (March 2015) Working together to safeguard children
3. HM Government (2015) what to do if you are worried a child is being abused
4. HM Government (2015) information sharing
5. HM Government (2015) Disqualification under The Childcare Act 2006
6. HM Government (March 2015) Keeping children safe in education-information for all school and college staff-The Counter Terrorism and Security Act
7. Procedure for Managing Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers- South Tessa LSCB
8. Safeguarding Children in Education (DFES 2004)
9. The Sexual Offences Act 2002
10. Data Protection Act 1998
11. Anti-bullying policy
12. Race Equality Policy
13. Equality and Diversity Policy
14. Harassment Policy
15. Staff Disciplinary Policy
16. Staff Recruitment Policy
17. Whistle Blowing policy
18. E Safety policy
19. Health and Safety Policy
20. Confidentiality Policy

2.0 Scope and Rationale

This school believes that children must be protected from harm at all times.

1. We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
2. We want children who use or have contact with this organisation to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
3. We want parents and carers who use or attend our organisation to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well being and keeps them safe.
4. We want organisations who work with or commission work from us, or who provide funding to us to have confidence and recognize that we are a safe organisation.
5. We will achieve this by having an effective safeguarding children procedure and follow National guidance (What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused.)
6. If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm we will notify Children's Social Care via [Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council First Contact Team, Tithebarn House, High Newham Road, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8HR Tel: 01642 527764](#)

Email: firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk or the police, in order that they can be protected if necessary.

7. This safeguarding children policy statement and our safeguarding children procedure apply to all staff, volunteers and users of Mill Lane Primary School and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises.
8. We will review our safeguarding children policy and procedures annually or when legislation changes to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

This document is Mill Lane Primary School's policy on Child Protection and Safeguarding and is in line with procedures set out by the Stockton Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

This policy applies to all adults working on our sites.

There are five main elements to our policy

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- Equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Supporting pupils who have been abused
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at the school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school '**Behaviour Policy**' and '**Positive Handling Policy**' are aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable, but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that when a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves, we will transfer information to the new school/academy. If the school does not know

where the pupil has moved to, we will contact the LA Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.

3.0 Introduction

Mill Lane Primary School fully recognise their responsibilities for child protection.

Reasons for Following Procedure

- To protect the child to the best of our ability
- To avoid delay
- To provide consistency
- To protect all staff
- To ensure that, if further action is taken by another agency, then the school has followed agreed child protection procedures

Our main aim is to provide a safe, secure and stable base for children and to help to protect them from harm. The welfare of the child is of paramount importance to all the adults, including members of the Governors and volunteers who work in our school. To achieve this aim we will:

- Ensure safer recruitment and vetting practises are followed, therefore checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who wish to work with our children.
- Assign a Nominated Person for Child Protection and a Designated person for looked after children
- Raise awareness of safeguarding / child protection issues to staff, parents and children.
- Provide an environment where children feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Help equip children with skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Develop, implement and review policy and procedures in relation to child protection.
- Train and raise awareness of all staff, defining their role and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse.(Reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education)
- Ensure there is effective communication between staff on child protection matters.
- Identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- Report cases or suspected cases of abuse to First Contact Team, Social Care.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Provide a curriculum and ethos which aims to prevent children from being drawn into radicalised, extreme behaviour or acts of terrorism. Our school will work in partnership with the Channel panel set up by the LA.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals to provide co-ordinated support and help to protect children who are subject to protection plans, work in partnership with Social Care when undertaking section 17 or section 47 assessments.

In our school we respect our children. The atmosphere is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. The school ethos promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives children a sense of being valued.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of our curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them (e.g. 'stranger danger' and 'internet safety').

We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all of our children make good educational progress.

Child abuse can take a variety of forms:

- **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, slapping, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, undue restraint, 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 fabricated and induced illness.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Unexplained bruising:
 - In or around the mouth
 - Black eyes, especially if both eyes are bruised and there are no marks to forehead or nose
 - Grasp marks
 - Finger marks
 - Bruising of the ears
 - Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back area)
 - Differing ages of bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns and scalds
- Cigarette burns
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away

- **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 in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. They may include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

Children under the age of five may:

- Become insecure or cling to parent in a fearful way
- Show extreme fear of a particular person
- Cry hysterically when their nappy is changed
- Become hysterical when clothing is removed, particularly underclothes
- Have some physical signs in the genital or anal areas: smell of semen etc.
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat, anal or genital areas
- Regress to a much younger behavioural pattern
- Behave in a way sexually inappropriate to their age, being obsessed with sexual matters as opposed to normal exploration
- Stare blankly, seem unhappy, confused, sad
- Become withdrawn, stop eating, have chronic nightmares, begin wetting again when previously dry
- Play out sexual acts in too knowledgeable a way with dolls or other children
- Produce drawings of sex organs such as erect penises
- Stop enjoying activities with other children, such as stories or games
- Seem to be bothered or worried, but will not tell why as if keeping a secret
- Change from being happy and active to being withdrawn and fearful
- Repeat obscene words or phrases said by the abuser
- Say repeatedly that they are bad, dirty or wicked
- Become aggressive and hurtful
- Act in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults

Children from ages of five to twelve may:

- Hint about secrets they cannot tell
- Say that a friend has a problem
- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you something
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught
- Have terrifying dreams
- Start wetting themselves
- Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities, such as music, sports, art, scouts or guides, going to summer camp, gym club
- 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
- Act in a sexual way inappropriate to their age
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse
- Seem to be keeping secret something which is worrying them
- Have urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat
- Have chronic ailments, such as stomach pains or headaches

- Take over the parent role at home, seem old beyond their years (if a victim of incest)
- Become severely depressed, even attempt suicide
- Have a poor self-image, self-mutilate
- Continually run away
- Regress to younger behaviour, such as thumb-sucking, surrounding themselves with previously discarded cuddly toys
- Show discomfort when walking
- Say that they are no good, dirty, rotten
- Be wary, watchful
- Repeat obscene words or phrases which may have been said during the abuse
- Attempt to sexually abuse another child
- Talk or write about sexual matters
- Find excuses not to go home or to a friend's house after school (places where abuse may be happening)
- Act in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults

(Produced courtesy of Kidscape “Protecting Children” Pack)

- **Emotional abuse:** The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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.

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
 - Admission of punishment which appears excessive
 - Over-reaction to mistakes
 - 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 and clothes
- **Neglect** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is 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 or clothing, failure 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, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible Signs of Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- No social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food and clothes

Our school should monitor pupils who are subject to a Child Protection Plan. Parents / carers should be made aware of the school's child protection policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interests of the child.

Guidelines for monitoring:

When?

When there is a concern in the school about:

- Marks on the body
- Unusual / different behaviour (including academic functioning)
- Mood changes
- Puzzling statements or stories by a child
- Information from others
- If requested by another agency e.g. following a case conference

Who?

- Teachers
- Other school staff
- Other LA staff in regular contact with the child

What?

- Patterns of attendance
- Changes of mood
- Changes in classroom functioning
- Relationships with peers and adults
- Behaviour
- Statements, comments, stories, 'news', drawings
- General demeanor and appearance
- Parental interest and comments
- Home / family changes
- Medicals
- Response to PE / sport
- Injuries / marks, past and present

How?

- Child's name to be placed on school's own 'Vulnerable Children' register kept by the designated person. This information will be shared at half termly Senior Leadership Meetings.

PREVENTATIVE APPROACHES

Through the curriculum children can be taught about the risks of different kinds of child abuse and be equipped with the skills they need to help them stay safe.

A child protection program should seek to support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence. It should be regarded as central to the well-being of the individual and is, therefore, seen to be an intrinsic part of all aspects of the curriculum. The most appropriate approach is skills based, set alongside a knowledge component, with an emphasis on helping children to develop the personal and social skills they need to keep themselves safe and to become responsible and independent adults.

Child protection can be interwoven with many aspects of the existing curriculum. It can help children to:

- Promote their understanding of relationships, the interaction between relationships and the key concepts
- Increase self-esteem and awareness
- Make judgments and problem solve
- Be assertive
- Recognise, accept and express feelings
- Explore the nature of trust
- Identify 'okay' adults within personal safety networks
- Take decisions and accept responsibility for self and others
- Be self-reliant and independent

A supportive school ethos can encourage children to feel safe and to talk about their feelings. It can:

- Reduce isolation in the emotions they experience
- Relieve tension by enabling children to talk and be listened to
- Provide an opportunity to develop an appropriate vocabulary, making violence less likely as a way of expressing needs
- Allow children to perceive situations more clearly for planning action or change
- Make children feel protected by a 'listening environment'. Abusive situations at home or school thrive on secrecy

All children need to know what to do in case someone tries to harm them. Knowing that the vast majority of children are abused or harmed by someone they know, teaching children to avoid dangerous situations, to recognise inappropriate touching, can encourage them to trust their own judgment and to feel safer, more aware and confident.

4.0 Staff Responsibilities are:

4.1 Head Teacher to ensure that:

- Procedures for handling cases of suspected abuse, including allegations against staff and volunteers, which are consistent with those agreed by the Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board and easily available to all staff and volunteers for reference are put in place.
- School Governors receive yearly awareness raising in respect of their roles and responsibilities in regard to Child Protection / Safeguarding.
- School Governors adopt appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard children in our school.
- Policies and procedures are implemented by staff.
- Parents / carers to be made aware each autumn term of the safeguarding policies that are in place and who the Nominated Person for Child Protection is.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to carry out Safeguarding Children / Child Protection effectively.
- There is a Nominated Person for Child Protection who has received appropriate training and support for this important role.
- Understand the role of the designated person.
- All staff and adults working in our school understand their safeguarding children responsibilities and are able to voice their concern if they feel a child is vulnerable or at risk.
- Staff are aware of the 'whistle blowing' protocol and understand they must voice their concern of any individual working practices that are deemed unsafe and unprofessional.
- The school develop effective working partnerships with relevant agencies and cooperate as required in regard to safeguarding children matters, including attendance at child protection conferences and other related meetings.
- School provides appropriate reports for child protection meetings.
- That all information and records are kept confidentially and securely.
- Recruitment and vetting procedures are followed in all appointments of staff including those working in our school in a voluntary / unpaid capacity.
- Any children suspected of being drawn into extremist radical behaviour or beliefs are acted upon with the Nominated/Deputy Person for Child Protection who will assess and appropriately refer to Social Care/Channel Panel.
- Site security is in place with all visitors required to identify themselves, then sign in and sign out when leaving the school.
- Ensure that all staff know and are alert to signs of possible abuse and know what to do if they have any concerns or suspicions
- Make parents aware of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Work with local partners such as the LA and Social Care Department to create a safe environment for children at the school

4.2 Nominated Person for Child Protection has responsibility for coordinating action within the school and liaising with Social Care and other agencies in respect of suspected child abuse.

- **The Nominated Person Child Protection for 2016/2017 academic year in Mill Lane Primary School is Sue Skillcorn (HT)**

The main responsibilities for the Nominated Person for Child Protection are:

- To ensure that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training and adhere to and follow procedures outlined in the Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures.
- To help identify signs and symptoms of abuse and be the first person education staff report cases to.
- To possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns and act as a source of advice and coordinated action within the school over cases of abuse or children in need.
- To ensure the child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated member of the Governors for child protection regarding this
- To ensure each member of staff has access to and is aware of the school's child protection policy
- To ensure that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child protection issues.
- To ensure all staff receive child protection awareness raising training to help them recognise and identify signs of abuse.
- To raise awareness of child safety issues within our school.
- To ensure that the school have an up-to-date child protection policy which is consistent with the LSCB procedures. The policy should be reviewed annually.
- To attend and represent the school at child protection meetings.
- To be responsible for securely managing child protection files, compiling reports, and recording and sharing information appropriately.
- To ensure that all information and records are kept confidentially and securely.
- To liaise with and develop good working relationships / links with Social Care, the Child Protection Officer for Education and other relevant professionals.
- To raise awareness of their role with staff, parents and children.
- To be available to staff for consultation purposes.
- To be responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board and Local Authority.
- To ensure that where children leave the school roll, their file is transferred to the new school/academy as soon as possible. (This can be done electronically). If a child leaves and the new school/academy is not known, the LA should be alerted so that these children can be included on the database for lost pupils.

4.3 School Staff (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility to report any concerns they have about a child's safety to the Nominated Person for Child Protection.

Teachers have a vital role to play in both the prevention and detection of abuse. Detection of abuse often depends in the first instance, on suspicion. Teachers and other staff are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time, and often develop close and trusting relationships with pupils. School staff may well be the first to suspect that something is amiss when an individual behaves atypically, withdraws from social contacts with others, exhibits anxiety or stress symptoms in the school, appears unusually distressed, confused or disturbed.

A wide range of possible situations can fall into the category of a 'disclosure'. Because it is impossible to know in advance what a child will say, it is advisable to follow the suggestions outlined below. Children will probably tell you about incidents involving bullying or bribes perhaps from peers. However, children who live in

abusive situations, commonly ask teachers for help with minor anxieties. It can be a way of seeking out a safe situation in which to confide a major concern.

Children 'tell' in many different ways – through their behaviour, play and creative work as well as direct disclosure. Young children are more likely to confide, but lack the understanding of language to be able to. Older children can often feel that the abuse sets them apart. Our treatment of the issue may collude in the conspiracy of silence and keep victims isolated.

It is important to remember:

- Most children make some attempt to 'tell' in the early stages of abuse. Often they are not heard. They may never tell again.
- Sexual abuse of a young child within a family usually only ends when the secret is told. Such abuse can be ongoing over many years. It is rarely a one off event.
- No-one really wants to hear that a child is being abused, but unless someone hears, the abuse goes on.
- Children react in different ways to the same home circumstances. If one child causes concern it is important to discuss the behaviour of other children in the family.

Staff need to share concerns with other staff, monitor small incidents and be ready to listen to children's problems.

It is not however, the responsibility of teachers and other staff to investigate suspected abuse. Care must be taken in asking and interpreting children's responses to questions about indications of abuse.

Staff should not ask the child leading questions as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.

The chief task is to listen to the child and not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events and to make a note of the discussion to record on a yellow form. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said.

Staff should never give undertakings of absolute confidentiality to a pupil

Extra care should be taken to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse and neglect in children with SEND. The school should try to create an atmosphere in which pupils with SEND feel confident and able to discuss these matters.

When A Child Tells:

- If a child discloses directly, remember that it has taken a lot of courage to get to this point and your response is crucial. **This child has chosen you as someone they trust.**
- **Listen seriously:** abused children are often threatened by the perpetrator that they will not be believed. Listen without judging and show the child that you take their problem seriously. Tell the child that you believe him/her. Choose a place to talk where you will not be interrupted.

- **Reassure the child:** the threats that children live under to keep the secret are very powerful and they will be frightened of the consequences of telling. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing. Tell them they are not to blame. Offer ongoing support.
- **Empathise:** do not tell the child how they should feel. Validate their feelings and just listen. Avoid asking questions but feedback what they say if you need to respond verbally.
- Following a disclosure, you need to immediately talk to the designated child protection member of staff and record it on a yellow form.

Summary and Action

If a staff member suspects a child may be a victim of abuse they are advised to do the following:

- If a child discloses information that suggests possible abuse has taken place we recommend the following:
 - Listen to the child.
 - Never coach or lead the child.
 - Do not investigate or over question the child.
 - Reassure the child they were right to talk.
 - Inform the Nominated Person for Child Protection ASAP.
 - Record events on CPOMS (e.g. what the child has said, word for word)
 - Include the date and time.
- If a staff member receives information (e.g. third party) or sees something (e.g. suspicious bruise or mark) which gives them a cause for concern, they must inform the Nominated Person for Child Protection ASAP.
- Staff should always consult with the Nominated Person for Child Protection when they first begin to have concerns about a child. This process will help clarify what action if any, needs to be taken to meet the needs of the child.
- Where staff feel a child is expressing or demonstrating extreme, radical views or behaviours they should make the Head Teacher/Nominated Person for Child Protection aware of their concerns.
- In exceptional circumstances such as an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to Children's Social Care.
- If staff have concerns regarding the conduct of another staff member they should inform the Head Teacher directly. If the concern is regarding the Head Teacher's conduct the staff member must contact the Chair of Governors.
- Where staff have concerns regarding safeguarding practices within our school, the Head Teacher should be made aware of these concerns. If after raising concerns the staff member is not satisfied with the response/resultant action, staff members should refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

4.4 **The Governors of the school should:**

- Sanction the Child Protection Policy, review the policy annually, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and be satisfied that it is complied with
- Ensure that a designated person, together with a nominated member of the Governors for child protection, are in place
- Ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures in place
- Recognise the importance of the role of the designated person and support them, ensuring the training necessary to be effective is undertaken and appreciate the additional duties taken on by the member of staff when carrying out this role, especially when there are ongoing child protection issues
- Recognise the contribution the school can make to helping children keep safe through the teaching of self-protection skills and encouragement of responsible attitudes to adult life.

5.0 **Allegations against Staff**

Allegations against staff could be initiated in our school by children, parents or staff.

Members of staff may be the first to spot anything that is seriously wrong within the school. However, they might not say anything because they think this would be disloyal, or they might be worried that their suspicions are not justified. They may also be worried that they or someone else may be victimised.

Members of the public may also have concerns and should also be encouraged to contact you with their concerns.

This school would like to make it clear that if anyone wants to raise any concern, they can do so with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

What types of action could be covered by the policy?

The policy should deal with **serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following –**

- Concerns about the conduct of another staff member
- Fraud or corruption
- Member groups, children or students, particularly children and adults in our care, being mistreated
- Unauthorised use of money
- An unlawful act
- Any danger to health and safety
- A person abusing their position for any unauthorised use or for personal gain
- A person deliberately not keeping to a policy, a code of practice or any law or regulation
- A person failing to meet appropriate standards
- A person being discriminated against because of their race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, age sex, sexuality, class or home life

The concern may be about members of staff, people who work directly for or with the organisation, as part of a collaborative/ partnership agreement.

What is not covered?

Confidential Reporting / Whistle-Blowing policies cannot be used to deal with serious or sensitive matters that are covered by other procedures.

Such Procedures include the following –

- Staff's complaints about their employment. These complaints should be dealt with through a Grievance Procedure.
- Customers' complaints about services. These complaints should be dealt with through a Complaints Policy.

Individuals utilising the Confidential Reporting / Whistle-blowers Policy should feel confident to raise issues as where an allegation is true they have nothing to fear. If necessary you will take appropriate action under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 to protect them from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.

Anonymous allegations

As actions will be taken to protect members of staff (as explained above), staff are encouraged to give their name when you make an allegation. Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective and if, for example, staff do not give enough information, the matter may not be able to be investigated at all.

If staff feel that you still do not want to give their name this school will decide whether or not to consider the matter. The decision should depend on:

- The seriousness of the matter;
- Whether the concern is believable; and
- Whether you can carry out an investigation based on the information provided.

How to raise a concern via the confidential reporting / whistle-blowing concern policy

The Head Teacher is responsible for providing advice and guidance in respect of confidential reporting / whistle blowing.

If the person raising the matter works for the school, they should first raise their concern with their line manager or Head Teacher.

It is best to put concerns in writing giving as much information as possible – including any relevant names, dates, places and so on. The earlier the issue is raised, the easier it will probably be to take effective action.

Although the individual raising the concern will not have to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that the allegation is true, they will have to show that there are good reasons for their concern.

If an allegation or cause for concern is made against a member of staff the following action should be taken:

- The Head Teacher should be informed immediately.
- If the allegation is against the Head Teacher then the Chair of the Governors should be informed immediately.
- The Head Teacher/Chair of the Governors should seek support and guidance from the local authority and follow the '**Procedure for Managing Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers**' provided by Stockton Local Safeguarding Board.
- Immediate support and guidance should be sought from:
 - The Designated Officer for Stockton - (LADDO)
Phil Curtis (01429 284284)
 - The Child Protection Officer for Education for Stockton -
Diane McConnell (01642- 527040)

Where an individual staff member in regulated activity is dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned, the Head Teacher must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is a legal duty and failure to do so is a criminal act.

Making a Referral

When a member of staff has reported a case of suspected abuse, disclosure or child in need concern to the designated person, he/she should refer the case to, or discuss it with the investigating agencies. If the designated person is unsure about whether a case should formally be referred, he or she can seek advice from the LA's Lead Officer for Child Protection or the local Social Care department.

When making referrals regarding a child concern, (whether they are in need of support or protection) to Social Care, the designated person should ensure that they have, where appropriate and safe to do so, discussed their concerns with parent(s) / person(s) with parental responsibility / young person and sought their agreement to make a referral to Social Care.

The only exception to this would be where seeking parental consent would put a child at further risk of abuse / significant harm where:

- sexual abuse is suspected;
- organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- fabricated or induced illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected;
- where forced marriage or cultural / honour based violence is suspected;
- where contacting parents / carers would place a child at further risk.

Inability to inform parents for any reason will not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom. Seeking advice from Children's Services about who will inform the parents in all circumstances is part of the referral process.

If the concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from someone not known to the child or child's family, make a telephone referral directly to the police and advise the parents.

If the concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the children, make a telephone referral to Children's Social Care.

If consent to referral is not given, the designated person may wish to consult with Social Care, who will assist in ascertaining whether the threshold for child protection enquiries has been met, or whether any further action should be taken by the referring agency or themselves.

When making a referral the designated person should state to the Social Care team member that he/she wishes to make a child protection referral. The Child Protection Referral form should be completed and sent with the disclosed information.

Telephone referrals should always be followed up by a written referral, which should be sent under confidential cover to the First Contact Team.

A referral should be made as soon as possible after concerns have been raised, and always during the same working day.

Stockton-on-Tees

First Contact, Tithebarn House, High Newham Road, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8HR
Tel: 01642 527764 Email; firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk

Middlesbrough

First Contact Team, MTLC, Tranmere Avenue, Middlesbrough. TS3 8PB
Tel: 01642 726004 Fax: 01642 201994

Hartlepool

The Children's Hub
Tel: 01429 284284

The Duty Team, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool. TS24 8AY
Tel: 01429 523 872

Redcar & Cleveland

The Access Team, Seafield House, Kirkleatham Street, Redcar. TS10 1SP
Tel: (01642) 771500

Out Of Hours

	Children's Services	
	<u>Emergency Duty Team</u>	<u>Police</u>
Telephone	08702 402994	101

6.0 Staff Training

All staff and members of the Governing Body receive Child Protection training (maximum period for updating it is two years) which raises their awareness of processes and procedures agreed by the Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Training also covers areas such as 'signs and symptoms' and 'internet safety'.

Newly appointed staff receive training through our induction programme and attend specific courses ran by the Child Protection Officer for Education (e.g. NQT's).

Staff have undertaken E-Learning courses promoted by the LSCB.

The Nominated Person for Child Protection receives training on an annual basis including LSCB facilitated courses.

The Head Teacher has completed the on-line Safer Recruitment Training.

6.1 Recruitment

Our School will take all possible steps to prevent unsuitable people working with children.

When interviewing potential staff we will ensure that:

- There is an open recruitment process
- There is a rigorous interview
- We verify the applicants identity and any academic or vocational qualifications claimed
- We verify that applicants are eligible to work in the UK
- References are taken up by direct contact with referees
- Evidence of the date of birth and address of the potential employee is sought
- An enhanced disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau is provided

Where a position requires an enhanced disclosure make this clear on the application form, job advert and any other information provided about the post. All applicants should complete an application form enabling each of them to have the same opportunity to provide information about themselves and which can assist in identifying any gaps in employment

In any interview the interview panel should explore:

- The candidates attitude toward children and young people
- His or her ability to support the schools agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Gaps in the candidates employment history and
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and / or a referee

A job offer should only be made subject to the necessary checks being satisfactory.

All staff will be provided with a job description with safeguarding the welfare of children being a specified part of all staffs role and contract of employment, a clear code of conduct or safer working practice guidance and be required to work a probationary period.

6.2 Post Appointment

The school will provide an induction programme for all staff (paid or unpaid), regardless of previous experience.

The purpose of which should be to:

- Provide training about the organisations policies and procedures
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role they have been engaged.
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities and
- Enable the person's line manager, or mentor to recognize any concerns about the person ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

is concerned the induction programme should include information about, and written statements of:

- Policies, procedures and statements in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- How and with whom to raise concerns with
- Other relevant procedures, e.g. disciplinary, capability and confidential reporting (previously known as whistle blowing)
- The School's Performance Management System

All staff should be provided with the opportunity to engage in appropriate training relating to the nature and level of responsibility they hold. All staff working in school should have access to basic safeguarding children training during induction or a refresher course (Working Together states the minimum for this is 3 yearly however Ofsted request this is every 2 years) for more experienced staff.

7.0 Confidentiality

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but we will act on the basis that the welfare of the child is paramount. The degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the child and personal information will be shared where this is necessary to protect the child (1998 Data Protection Act).

Child protection records should be kept securely locked and are exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act for manual records, the Education (School Records) Regulations exempt information relating to child abuse from the requirement of disclosures.

School should be notified by Social Care when a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan starts the school. It is the school's responsibility to pass the information on immediately if a child transfers to a new school/academy.

Prior to meetings with other professionals, the designated person will request brief written details from staff to support child protection report writing or to facilitate dialogue at case conferences, core group meetings etc. Staff will be asked to complete brief notes using the '**Class Teacher Conference/Meeting Notes**'

8.0 Minimising Risks to Children

ALL STAFF MUST READ THE KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION. For School and College (March 2015) Document and any following amendments. <http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Keeping-Children-Safe-In-Education...information-for-all-staff.pdf>

They also sign to say that they have done so.

(All staff refers to teachers, non-teaching staff, students, staff from other agencies and volunteers)

8.1 Risk Assessments

This school undertakes risk assessments to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone who can access our facility and staff. The school has an additional Educational Visits Policy where the details of our risk assessments are explained.

External Activities

Activities provided by the organisation will undergo a risk assessment before the activity or action takes place to assess any potential health and safety risks. Parental consent will be obtained.

Risk assessments will work through and provide assurance that everything has been taken into account. e.g.:

- What is the hazard?
- Who might be harmed & how?
- Are any further controls required?
- Is insurance required?
- Have we emergency contact details?
- Have appropriate checks been carried out for staff and / or volunteers?

This is not an exhaustive list.

Hire of Facilities

This school requires all potential hirers to meet the hire terms and conditions set out in the agreement. The agreement includes a section regarding what the respective responsibilities are and what is expected from the school and the hirer. We will only hire the facilities out if the hirer can provide assurance that they also take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously

8.2 Safe Practice/Codes of Conduct in our School

At this school we are child-centred in all that we do. Being excellent role models for children who attend our school is of paramount importance. This is reinforced to all staff and volunteers through supervision, training and development.

Staff/pupil relationships/communications that includes the use of social media

It is essential that care is taken to minimise the possibility for abuse and misunderstanding and misinterpretation. False allegations are rare but general good practice will help prevent them. The following list includes behaviour that the majority of staff/volunteers working with children should never engage in:

- Be alone with children out of public view. Leaders should not ask staff/volunteers to work with children in situations where staff/volunteers will be completely unobserved
- Discuss with children in any depth details about their personal life or personal relationships they hold outside of our school.
- Initiate affectionate physical contact except in circumstances where a child is showing immediate signs of being upset e.g. following an accident. Here the staff member, where possible, will seek to ensure any physical contact is witnessed by a third party and is not prolonged in nature.
- Seek social relationships with children outside of our school, including relationships developed through means of social media.

- Communicate via telephone, through email or social media directly with any child on role except through the school's official email accounts where all communication can be tracked.
- Kiss children
- Engage in rough or sexually provocative games
- Make sexual comments
- Invite or allow children into their home (childminders being an exception)
- Give a child a lift in their car except in emergencies or as part of their job ie taking children to a school event
- Let allegations, made by anyone, go unacknowledged, unresolved or not acted upon

Staff/volunteers are made aware of the potential for misunderstanding when touching children.

Staff/volunteers should, however, endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstanding of their actions.

(N.B. For some children, abuse is a normal part of their lives and they may not show any outward signs of ill treatment. Children who are being abused may also be over achievers and eager to please.)

8.3 Complaints Procedure

It is reasonable for children, young people, parents and carers to have the right to complain or make comment if they are unhappy with the care or service they receive. This school has a complaints policy which is available within school. It demonstrates the school's openness and hopes to reassure everyone that this school takes the care of children and young people seriously.

9.0 Monitoring and Review

School Governors will ensure that we undertake the following:

- Annually review our Child Protection Policy
- We have a senior member of staff as Nominated Person for Child Protection
- Review annually the workload of the Nominated Person for Child Protection by requesting a report detailing related child protection work undertaken. Governors to support as felt appropriate
- Monitor and evaluate child protection training that staff receive
- Review all aspects of safeguarding children / working practices and develop as required

Signed and dated:

Head Teacher

Chair of Governors