



CHILD PROTECTION and SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Drafted by: Maggie Guy

Committee Member responsible: Judith Weeks

Reviewed by: Maggie Guy/Judith Weeks

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Last reviewed: November 2010

Date of next review: November 2011

Signed: *Judith Weeks*
Clerk of School Committee

Child Protection Policy – Statement

Sibford aims to nurture those qualities perceived to represent ‘that of God in everyone’ by maintaining a culture in which all in the community can be themselves and develop confidence, self-esteem and tolerance. The school sets out to enable all pupils to recognise their own talents and to help them realise their potential wherever it may lie; similarly the school seeks to meet the educational and pastoral needs of all pupils by ensuring a secure setting in which they feel valued and respected. The school aims to provide pupils with a thirst for lifelong learning and an appreciation of, and active concern for, their immediate environment and the wider community.

The Head is responsible for all child protection matters in the school.

Maggie Guy is the Child Protection Officer.

Abuse, in the context of this policy, includes all forms of physical, sexual or emotional mal-treatment.

Sibford fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. The school seeks to promote positive, working relationships with other agencies involved in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse. The school also follows procedures set out by Oxfordshire’s Local Safeguarding Childrens Board (LSCB). Its policy applies to all staff, members of School Committee, and volunteers working in the school.

There are six main elements to the policy:

- ensuring the school practises safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children; (see Sibford School staff recruitment process and checks on other adults)
- raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop;
- supporting a member of staff who is the subject of an allegation.

Child Protection Policy

Specific Aims

The Head takes responsibility for all child protection matters in the school; Maggie Guy is the Child Protection Officer. All cases of actual, suspected or alleged child abuse within, or outside, school should be reported to the Child Protection Officer. The Child Protection Officer will discuss the case with those making the report or allegation and advise on the appropriate course of action, unless the report or allegation is directed against the Child Protection Officer, in which case the matter should be reported to the Head.

In cases of actual or strong suspicions of physical or sexual abuse, the information must be passed to the Child Protection Officer immediately. In the absence of the Child Protection Officer, the matter should be reported to the Head. If the allegation or suspicion is against the Head, the report should be made to the Social Services Assessment Team:

Barry Armstrong, Service Manager, Attendance and Welfare
Email: barry.armstrong@oxfordshire.gov.uk, tel: 01865 815956

or

Beverly Rowson, Child Protection Co-ordinator email:
Beverly.rowson@oxfordshire.gov.uk, tel: 01865 815554

The school recognises that, because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried;
- include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- ensure the policy includes a requirement for a referral to be made within 24 hours (in writing or with written confirmation of a telephoned referral) of allegations or suspicions of abuse to the local social services department to carry out child protection investigations, rather than internal investigation by the school.
- include procedures for all staff (including associate staff) employed by the school who receive allegations of abuse or suspect that abuse may be occurring at school or elsewhere
- ensure the policy is clear on action should the school's designated recipient of such reports themselves be subject to allegation or suspicion.

The school will follow the guidance set out by 'Oxfordshire Child Protection Procedures' and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- ensure the school has a designated teacher for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role at **two yearly intervals**

- ensure the school has a nominated member of School Committee responsible for child protection (Judith Weeks) and for reviewing child protection protocols with Maggie Guy on an annual basis
- ensure every member of staff, volunteer and member of School Committee knows the name of the designated teacher responsible for child protection and their role.
- ensure that School Committee receives an annual report on the range of child protection issues dealt with during the year
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for child protection, and receive training at **three yearly intervals**
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection and that parents of boarders may receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy upon request
- notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. **Under no circumstances should Headteachers/Governors conduct their own investigation until the matter has been agreed with the Service Manager and Attendance and Welfare/Early Years and Families or Police. Attempts to do so could seriously hinder any further investigation and reduce professional impartiality.**
- **All allegations should be referred to the Service Manager Attendance and Welfare (tel: 01865 815956). There should be no time delay and care should be taken to maintain confidentiality.**
- ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed (including associate staff and volunteers) and include checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate) with satisfactory outcome.

The school recognises a particular responsibility to boarding pupils, and follows the guidance from “Boarding Schools: National Minimum Standards”, as circulated by the Boarding Schools Association (BSA) in conjunction with the Department of Health and CSCI.

- The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved
- Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night
- All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive

regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding

- Any role of spouses and partners of staff within boarding houses is made clear
- All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice

The school recognises 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 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 which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school;
- the briefing, of senior pupils given positions of responsibility over other pupils on appropriate action to take should they receive any allegations of abuse;
- Liaison with the School Nurse and other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service;
- Ensuring that, when a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed

Advice for Staff

Obviously being the subject of an allegation can cause distress to the member of staff. It can also cause distress to the whole school community. If it is felt necessary, by the Headteacher or employee, external support can be found for the individual subject to the allegation. Employees should also seek advice from their professional association. Detailed advice for staff may be found in the Staff handbook.

Countering Bullying/Social Respect Policy

Sibford School has an effective policy on "Social Respect" which includes ways in which the school counters bullying. *The policy is provided to parents of boarders, and is available and known to both staff and boarders, including junior and recently appointed staff*