



Ruishton C of E Primary School Safeguarding Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Chris Kamin (Head Teacher)

Date: March 2018

To be reviewed: March 2019

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, health and guidance by fostering an honest, open caring and supportive climate. The pupil's welfare is of paramount importance.

Ruishton C of E Primary School fully recognises the responsibility it has under the Education Act 2002, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007), and the Education Act (2011), and the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school.

All staff involved with children (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility to be mindful of issues related to children's safety and welfare and a duty to report and refer any concerns.

This policy sets out how the school's governing body discharges its statutory duties in promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

There are three main elements to our Child Protection Policy:

1. **Prevention** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to the pupils within the whole school protective ethos.
2. **Protection** by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are appropriately recruited (following DfE Safer Recruitment guidance) and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
3. **Support** to pupils who may have been abused.

This policy applies to all staff working in the school, including governors. Concerned parents may also contact the school or one of the governors.

School Commitment

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps all children, and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse.

Ruishton C of E Primary School will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that pupils and their carers 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 for PHSE/Citizenship, which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

Framework

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 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)
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DfES 2011)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2015)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (DfE 2011)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)

Schools do not operate in isolation. The welfare of children is a collective responsibility of all schools working in partnership with other agencies, the voluntary sector and service users and carers. All local authorities have a particular responsibility towards children and families most at risk of social exclusion, (see DfE“Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2015)

Child Protection is the responsibility of all adults, especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice across all agencies is the responsibility of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. (LSCB)

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to Child Protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

It will:

- Designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's Child Protection policy, procedures and report to the full Governing Body as necessary.
- Ensure an annual Safeguarding Audit is completed with the allocated Safeguarding Governor and presented to the Governing Body. The Audit is completed online at <https://someretscb.vc-enable.co.uk>
- Ensure that this Policy is revised and updated annually

Roles and responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (Section 11, Children Act 2004). There are, however, key people with schools and the LA/LSCB who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection Procedures. The names of those holding these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document, and displayed in the office for all staff and carers to see.

The designated child protection lead at our School is Christopher Kamin. In his absence, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Kim Cinicola will take the lead. In any event, the Head Teacher will be informed of any child protection concerns by the appropriate person. Should any concerns relate to the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will be contacted.

Training and support

The Head Teacher will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Lead Person is a member of the school's leadership team; that they, their deputy and the governing body attend training relevant to their role.

All staff working in a school setting must have received 'Basic Awareness' training in Safeguarding and Child Protection and this must be updated every 3 years. The child protection lead is responsible for ensuring this; they can deliver this training themselves once they have completed the LSCB "Working Together" course, via the three hour cascade training pack which is available from the LSCB or this can be purchased as a traded service from the LSCB.

Procedures

Where it is believed that a pupil is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the South West Child Protection Procedures (www.swcpp.org.uk) and the LSCB documents which can be found on

www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk and on Learning and Achievement website.

These procedures make it clear, confirmed in our own school policies, that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance. This takes precedence over sensitivities about relations with parents, the likely reaction of other parents and the community and any wish a child might have for complete confidentiality (which cannot be guaranteed). Members of staff not following the procedures could put themselves and the child concerned at risk. As long as the procedures are adhered to, members of staff will receive the full support of the Governing Body and, where appropriate, the Local Authority (LA.)

Parents will be informed of the school's duties of Child Protection through the school website and information provided to them when they join the school.

Procedures Checklist

Child protection procedure checklist for our staff

If:

- A pupil discloses abuse, or
- A member of staff suspects a child may have been abused, or
- A third party expresses concern
- A staff member witnesses a potentially abusive situation involving another staff member.

The member of staff **MUST: RECORD AND REPORT TO THE CHILD PROTECTION LEAD**

If you receive a disclosure it is important to reassure the child that what they say will be taken very seriously and everything possible done to help.

If you are in the room when a pupil begins to disclose concerns to another person, you should stay unobtrusively in the background. You may be able to support/witness what has been said if required.

- **Respond** without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock
- **Enquire casually** about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset
- **Confidentiality must not be promised** to children or adults in this situation
- **Observe** carefully the demeanour of behaviour of the child
- **Record** in detail what has been seen and heard: signed and date the record.

- **Do not interrogate** or enter into detailed investigations. Encourage the child to say what he wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.

Asking Questions – Staff are understandably anxious about what questions they can ask if they are concerned about a child, or if the young person tells them something they are concerned about. Asking open questions is often helpful to the young person and can help you clarify the situation for yourself.

- **It is important NOT to ask leading questions (ie questions that imply a specific answer)**
- **It is important to know when to stop asking questions and just listen**
- **It is important not to interrogate**

Questions you **can** ask:

- Tell me (“tell me what happened...”)
- Explain (“explain what you meant by.....”)
- Where (“where did this happen/where were you...”)
- When (“how long ago did this happen/when did this happen.....”)

Remember you are only clarifying with the young person if something concerning did happen or could have happened from the information they give you.

Then **REPORT** to the child protection lead without delay.

Members of staff **MUST NOT**

- Investigate suspected/alleged abuse themselves
- Evaluate the grounds for concern
- Seek or wait for proof
- Discuss the matter with anyone other than the Head /Designated Child Protection Lead Person

Children’s Social Care and the police Public Protection Unit (PPU) are the only agencies that can investigate allegations of abuse.

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.

No adult must ever guarantee confidentiality to any pupil. Staff should make pupils aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible, may put the child at greater risk or may not be in the best interest of the child's welfare. Decision should be made on a case by case basis and justifiable.

See <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00808-2008>

If you are unsure, seek legal advice or advice from Children's Social Care

Supporting pupils at risk

Ruishton C of E Primary 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 be challenging and defiant. 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.

Ruishton C of E Primary School will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum, to encourage self esteem and self motivation
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of school behaviour management policies
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents and carers.

- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situation.

We recognise that all children are vulnerable to abuse. However, school staff who work, in any capacity, with children with emotional and behavioural 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 abuse, mental health issues, substance or alcohol misuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

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.

Ruishton C of E Primary School will

- Keep clear detailed written records of safeguarding concerns about pupils, using the 'cause for concern sheet'. A chronology kept at the front will always summarise key events.
- Ensure all such records are kept separate from the child's main school file and in a securely locked location accessed only by specified staff.
- Ensure that the main file is marked to show that there is additional information held separately.
- The child protection file will indicate who has been notified including parents and the appropriate staff and governors.
- Ensure these records are passed on to the receiving school if a pupil transfers

We will ensure that child protection information is passed on to Children's Social Care and we will retain this record for as long as the child remains in school, or has transferred as described above.

Guidance from the Records Management Society is that when a pupil with a child protection record reaches statutory school leaving age (or where the pupil completed 6th form studies), the last school/ FE college attended should keep the general pupil records and child protection file until the pupil's 25th birthday. It should then be shredded. This timescale allows for any legal proceedings brought in terms of litigation by a pupil in respect of a school 'failing to provide an education'.

Early Help Assessment (EHA)

This form should be used where we consider that a child has needs, which cannot be met solely by the school, and where, following an assessment of the situation, we believe co-ordinated intervention is required to promote, safeguard or protect the welfare of the child.

In these circumstances, we will have records detailing what work has been undertaken by our school to support the child and family and why we believe that a more corporate and co-ordinated approach is needed. This information then provides the basis for the completion of the EHA. The request for co-ordinated support services for a family should always be discussed with parents unless to do so would place the child or others at greater risk of harm.

Where, following an assessment of a situation, it is considered immediate protective action is required, a referral must be made by the Child Protection lead or the Deputy Child Protection lead without delay. This referral should be by telephone to Somerset Direct (0845 345 9122) or Safeguarding Leads Consultation Line (0300 1233078) followed up in writing using the EHA, a copy to be retained by the school. These forms can be obtained from Professional Choices Website.

This referral

It is useful to write down your reason for referral before making your call. Include as much detail as you can.

Physical injury

Where your concern is about physical injury, make sure you note where on the body the injury is and describe shape and size. 'Cause for concern' templates, which include body maps, have been distributed to each school to assist with recording. They are also available on the Learning and Achievement website. Be careful to record the factual evidence – i.e. what you can actually see, not your opinion of how the injury may have been sustained.

Sexual abuse

Are your concerns about the child's behaviour? If so give as much detail as possible. State exactly what the child has been doing. Don't just report 'sexualised behaviour' - give specific details. Has the child made a disclosure? If the child discloses to you or to a member of your staff, record in as much detail as possible what was said, in the child's

words when possible. In addition note who was there and the child's emotional state throughout the disclosure. Make sure any hastily written notes are signed and **dated** and kept securely. Handwritten notes are useful evidence should the case go to court at a later date.

Emotional abuse

Referrals re emotional abuse usually involve a number of concerns arising from both contact with the child and contact with the parents. Emotional abuse can cause impairment in the child's development, and such children may have very low self-esteem and self-image. Detail the way the child functions at school, with peers and with parents. Emotional abuse is hard to evidence so detail the events that have led to your concerns.

Neglect

If you are to refer a child because of possible neglect, always check back to see if there have been any previous concerns. The Children Act 1989 talks about how the persistent neglect of very basic needs is likely to cause and impairment in the child's development. Always think through whether the case in question fits more appropriately within a 'child in need' framework than within a child protection framework. (For example, "mucky children may simply come from mucky families"; clearly the family needs to do something about the child's cleanliness and appearance, and may need some support in this, but it might not be the case that the child is being abused and in need of protection.)

Consent

In most cases it is agreed that it is better to tell the parent/carers that you intend to refer to Children's Social Care or the Police but think it through; **if you think telling may put the child at more risk, take advice first**. If in doubt, ring Somerset Direct (0300 123 2224) or Safeguarding Leads Consultation Line (0300 1233078).

Making the referral

Once the Designated Child protection lead has all the necessary information in front of them, they will be able to make a child protection referral with confidence, following the South West Child Protection Procedures (www.swcpp.org.uk). Record all your actions and responses from other agencies.

Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

If a Child Protection Conference is called about a specific child/ren it is a requirement that the school is represented and will share information about the child and their family. Usually this will be in the form of a written report, the contents of which will be shared with parents/carers prior to the meeting. Where the school provides a verbal report, parents/carers will be informed what is to be said prior to the conference.

Occasionally, the school may have information which is confidential and which will be shared in a closed meeting prior to the conference. If this is necessary, the Chair of the conference will discuss the matter with parents/carers beforehand. If you are unsure, discuss with the conference Chair before the conference date.

When any child becomes the subject of a child protection conference, local procedures require all other children in the family are considered. It may well be that the school will be required to provide information on children with whom there appear to be no direct concerns.

The school will contribute to the process of risk assessment and the decision about the child being in receipt of a child protection plan.

Safe schools, safe staff

- When recruiting staff and volunteers, the school must ensure all appropriate checks are made and the Safer Recruitment Guidance issued by the DfE is fully complied with. This applies to permanent and temporary staff, and volunteers.
- The school must keep a careful check on all visitors and guests whether their visit is by invitation or unsolicited and ensure that where appropriate, adults are not left with children, unsupervised.
- The school must ensure that there is sufficient staff (male/female balance) to run all activities.
- All school staff must be an adult role model for pupils: courteous, friendly and kind. No member of staff should make suggestive or discriminatory or other inappropriate comments.
- All school staff should respect pupils at all times regardless of their sex, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.

- No member of school staff must ever allow or engage in inappropriate verbal or physical contact of any description.
- All staff should be clear about what constitutes acceptable forms of communicating with children and the appropriate use of all electronic technology (ie. texts, social networking sites etc.)
- All school staff should be firm and fair with pupils. Favouritism should be avoided, as should singling out troublemakers.
- No member of school staff should allow pupils or adults to engage in abusive activities such as initiation rites, ridiculing or bullying (which includes cyber-bullying). This must be reported to the designated child protection lead.
- The school must develop a culture that allows staff to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out any inappropriate attitudes or behaviour to each other.
- The school must encourage children to trust their own feelings about adult behaviour and to assert their right to determine (within sensible limits) the behaviour with which they are comfortable.
- All school staff should ensure that when working individually with a pupil, they should be mindful of safe working practices, (e.g. where possible doors are left open), other staff are aware they are working on a one to one basis, and immediate help is available if needed.
- All school staff should report disclosures or concerns to the Child Protection lead.
- Staff should never trivialise child abuse issues
- No member of school staff should drive a pupil home without permission of the parent/carer and Head Teacher.
- No member of staff should ever take a young person to their home. In any one-to-one situation that is not a clear and proper part of your work, you put yourself at risk of false allegations.

All staff should be aware of and have read the Government Guidance called “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People”

Procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Never let allegations by a child or young person go unrecorded or unreported, including any made against you. In all instances the Head Teacher must be informed. They may choose to involve the Designated Child Protection Lead. If the concern involves the Head then the Chair of Governors must be informed.

In all situations the school's County HR contact and the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations Management, (LADO) must be informed. The contact details for the Local Authority Designated Officers are:

Education Safeguarding Advisor – Jane Weatherill 01823 355014

Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB): Consultation line: 0300 1233078

Extended schools

Schools need to be clear about safeguarding procedures in relation to extended school activities. Activities organised by or with the school, should be incorporated within the school's safeguarding and child protection policy. Alternatively the provider of the extended school service should have a bespoke child protection policy, in which case the provider's policy and CRB checks will need to be assured. It is the responsibility of the school to do this.

However this is managed it is essential that child protection and safeguarding principles apply to extended school activities and responsibility for ensuring adherence to these principles is clearly established.

Off-site provision

When placing pupils with other Education Providers, Ruishton C of E Primary School is responsible for checking that the provider has complied with required recruitment procedures and that individuals working with pupils are CRB checked. Within the provider contract, the manager of the provision should provide assurances, and sign the agreement that this requirement has been adhered to.

Professional judgement

Remember: value your professional judgement. School may be the only agency involved with the family at the time of referral, and always pass your concerns to your child protection lead(s).

Useful Publications (available from DfE website)

- “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education”
- “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2016”
- What to do if you are worried a Child is being abused”

Useful Websites

www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk

HM Government – Information sharing

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00808-2008>

South West Shared Child Protection Procedures

www.swcpp.org.uk/

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Useful Phone Numbers

1. **Somerset Direct 0300 123 2224**
2. **Safeguarding for Schools Advisor
Jane Weatherill 01823 358269**
3. **Local Authority Designated Officer
01823 357823 or 01823 357727**
4. **Consultation Line 0300 123 3078**