

# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

Colleges Nursery and Family Centre

September 2008

## **INTRODUCTION**

Colleges Nursery and Family Centre fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 175 (*Section 157 for Independent Schools, Academies and City Technology Colleges*) of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff at the Centre have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to Social Care via the Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre (Designated Person for Child Protection to refer).

This policy sets out how the Centre's governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the Centre.

**There are four main elements to our policy:**

**PREVENTION** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole Centre protective ethos

**PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

**SUPPORT TO PUPILS** who may have been abused.

## **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Our policy applies to all staff, paid and unpaid, working in the Centre including governors. Teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact the Centre and its governors.

### **1.0 PREVENTION**

1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect children.

1.2 The Centre will therefore:

1.2.1 establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;

1.2.2 ensure children know that there are adults in the Centre whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

1.2.3 include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and information about who to turn to for help;

1.2.4 Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.

### **2.0 PROCEDURES**

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board "Safeguarding Inter - Agency Procedures" which should be used in conjunction with the Education Child Protection Procedures. A copy of these procedures can be found in the Staff Room.

**2.2 The Designated Senior Member of Staff for Child Protection is Helen Snow.**

The Centre will:

2.2.1 ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken, as a minimum, the 2 day child protection training course run by The Education Child Protection Service

2.2.2 ensure this training is updated every two years in accordance with government guidance;

2.2.3 recognise the importance of the role of the designated person and ensure s/he has the time and training to undertake her/his duties;

2.2.4 ensure there are contingency arrangements should the designated member of staff not be available: In the absence of the designated person the 2 senior teachers will deal with urgent child protection concerns with advice from social care and /or the advice line. Guidance will be accessible in the staff room folder.

2.2.5 Ensure that the designated member of staff will take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. (The Designated Person has access to both Social Care and the Advice Line run by Education Child Protection for 'what if' conversations. The emergency duty team (out of hours) is also available.)

**2.3. The Role of Governors and Centre Staff**

The Centre will:

2.3.1 ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

- the name of the designated person and her/his role;
- how to pass on and record concerns about a pupil
- that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the Inter – Agency procedures
- where the Inter – Agency Procedures and Education Child Protection Procedures are located;

2.3.2 provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:

- their personal responsibility,
- the local procedures,
- the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
- how to support and respond to a child who tells of abuse

2.3.3 ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.

## 2.4 **Liaison with Other Agencies**

The Centre will:

2.4.1 work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.

2.4.2 notify the local Social Care team if:

- it should have to exclude a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
- there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan of more than two days duration from nursery (or one day following a weekend); or as agreed as part of any child protection plan or core group plan.

## 2.5 **Record Keeping**

The Centre will:

2.5.1 keep clear detailed 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 Care immediately;

2.5.2 ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;

2.5.3 ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools in accordance with the Education Child Protection procedures.

## 2.6 **Confidentiality and information sharing**

2.6.1 Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or Social Care Team as required.\*

2.6.2 The Headteacher or Designated Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

2.6.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

2.6.4 All staff must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

## 2.7 Communication with Parents

The Centre will:

- 2.7.1 undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action.
- 2.7.2 ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the nursery and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the Centre brochure.

## 3.0 SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 This nursery may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 3.3 We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.
- 3.4 The nursery will endeavour to support the pupil through:
  - 3.4.1 cross-curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
  - 3.4.2 the nursery ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and values people.
  - 3.4.3 the Centre's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the Centre. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The Centre will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
  - 3.4.4 liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Locality Teams.
  - 3.4.5 a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents;
  - 3.4.6 recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection;
  - 3.4.7 vigilantly monitoring children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Social Care **as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.**

\* The Local Safeguarding Children's Board Guidance on the Sharing of Information on Children in Need and in Need of Protection can be accessed from the LSCB website at [cambslscb.org.uk](http://cambslscb.org.uk)

3.5 When a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, information will be transferred to the new school immediately. The Child Protection Review Manager and Key Worker from Social Care will also be informed. We will follow the procedures for children that 'Missing from Education'.

### 3.6 **Drug Use and Child Protection**

3.6.1 The discovery that a young person is using illegal drugs or reported evidence of their drug use is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the Centre will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- to believe the young person's drug misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse;
- to believe the pupil's drug related behaviour is a result of abusing or endangering pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults;
- where the misuse is suspected of being prompted by serious parent/ carer drug misuse.

### 3.6.2 **Children of Drug Using Parents**

3.6.3 Further enquiries and or further action will be taken when the Centre receives reliable information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers in the following circumstances;

- the parental misuse is regarded as problematic (i.e. multiple drug use including injection);
- a chaotic and unpredictable home environment exists which can be attributed to drug or alcohol misuse;
- children are not being provided with acceptable or consistent levels of social and health care;
- children are exposed to criminal behaviour.

## 4.0 **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

4.1 The Centre will operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate CRB and reference checks are undertaken according to the DfES (now DCSF) document 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2007). Joanne Bouttell has undertaken the Safer Recruitment training.

4.2 The Centre will consult with the Named Senior Officer in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, the Education Child Protection Procedures and the school's Personnel Manual from EPM Ltd.

4.3 The Centre will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the Centre and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

- 4.4 The Centre will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents as advised within the Local Authority's Code of Conduct.\* The staff will receive guidance as part of Induction about how to communicate and create appropriate professional boundaries with disabled and vulnerable children. In particular staff will receive appropriate training in relation to Intimate Care and the school's guidance, as the use of this policy and procedure protects both children and staff.

*\* Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People' (Nov. 2007, AMA).*

- 4.5 The Centre will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of trust). Staff will also be made aware as part of Induction about how to report inappropriate sexualized behaviours to the Head Teacher or Designated Person to follow up with Social Care teams. Staff who work within a school have a duty of care to model appropriate social behaviours and to ensure that the professional role of trust is not abused.

## 5.0 **OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

### 5.1 **Physical Intervention**

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury to themselves, another person or property. All staff who were in post at the time undertook Positive Handling training on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006.

*\* DfES Guidance, Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils*

### 5.2 **Anti-Bullying**

Our policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. We expect staff to acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying constitutes a lack of duty of care may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### 5.3 **Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. The school records racist incidents online as part of LA monitoring. We acknowledge that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### 5.4 **Health and Safety**

Our Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, is reviewed annually by the governing body. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

## 5.5 Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Centre staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

The Centre has pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviours. The Centre will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support plan agreed with parents.

As part of the PSE curriculum staff will teach children personal safety skills commensurate with their ability and needs. Children will be taught personal safety skills such as telling and who to tell, good and bad touches and good and bad secrets. The content of lessons will be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be consolidated at home. See sex education and PSE policy.

The Centre has pupils who may have communication difficulties and we are aware that they are vulnerable to abuse because they are unable to express themselves to others. Instead such children will often exhibit changes in behaviours or signs and symptoms of abuse recognized by staff with a good knowledge of the child.

Where necessary, the school will provide additional training to staff to use Makaton, PECS or other communication systems. Supervision by senior managers will be vigilant to create a protective ethos around the child.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that disabled children know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

## 6.0 GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 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 monitor the school's child protection policy and practice and champion child protection issues;
- ensure an annual report is made to the governing body, and copied to the Education Child Protection Service, on child protection matters to include changes affecting CP policy and procedures, child protection training received, the number of incidents/cases (no names) and child protection in the curriculum;
- ensure that this policy is annually reviewed, updated and copied to the Education Child Protection Service.

**6.2 Extended Schools and Before and After School Activities**

6.2.1 If the governing body provides extended school facilities or before or after school activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

6.2.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body the governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

This policy was ratified on .....

and will be reviewed on .....

Signed by the Headteacher/Chair of Governors .....

## **Appendix A**

### **Standards For Effective Safeguarding Practice In Schools**

*Child protection matters are receiving an increased priority in Ofsted inspections. The following standards may assist schools in evaluating their practice*

In best practice, schools:

- 1 have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- 2 provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
- 3 work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to other agencies or Locality Teams as a constructive and helpful measure;
- 4 are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
- 5 monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, *in a secure place*, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
- 6 provide and support child protection training regularly to school staff every three years and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, and ensure that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose;
- 7 contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
- 8 use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account the guidance for Governors on sex and relationship education (DfES 2000);
- 9 provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the schools approach to bullying;
- 10 have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal, indirect, and cyber-bullying, - act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and who they can contact for support;

- 11 take particular care that pupils with SEN in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills, e.g. Makaton or PECS;
- 12 have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set out in the DfES (now DCSF) document Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
- 13 have a written whole school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by school staff and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards;
- 14 the school will ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LA for monitoring purposes.