

**Moorlands Schools Federation**

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Child Protection Policy**



# Moorlands Schools Federation

## Child Protection Policy

<b>Status</b>	<b>Ratified</b>	
<b>Date adopted by governing body:</b>	9 February 2016	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Annually	
Created by Andrea Grafton	January 2016	1.0
Related Policies	<i>e-safety, anti-bullying, PSHE, Behaviour for Learning Complaints, Staff code of conduct</i>	

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to assist school staff to appropriately implement the child protection policies of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and/or the Local Authority and to provide information for other interested parties. It applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

### 2. Legal framework and Guidance

This policy and these procedures have been developed in accordance with a number of statutory provisions, duties and guidance which apply to safeguarding and protecting children from harm. These include:

- Section 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 2004 which provides the legal underpinning for the transformation of children's services as set out in the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme.
- Working Together 2013
- Keeping Children safe in Education 2014
- Guidance on Safer Working Practices
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families 2000
- Human Rights Act and Data Protection Act 2000
- South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP) [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)
- The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report. Lord Laming 2009. Chapter 9 - Recommendations

**N.B. Significant harm** is the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the child. Harm is defined by the Act as:

- ill treatment (including sexual and physical)
- impairment of health (physical or mental) or impairment of development (physical, emotional, intellectual, social or behavioural) as compared to a child of similar age and background.

**Specific safeguarding issues include cyber bullying, fabricated/induced illness, faith abuse, gender based violence, gangs and youth violence, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), sexting,**

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**teenage relationship abuse, trafficking, private fostering, radicalisation and mental health.**

### General principles

- a. The welfare of the child is paramount.
- b. 'Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:  
  
Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings; and  
  
Identifying children and young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at school.'  
  
(Keeping Children safe in Education 2014)
- c. 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 school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

### 3. Aims

- To enable all pupils, through PSHE and pastoral support, to feel confident and able to express themselves on matters of personal health & welfare and to be listened to.
- To provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident and able to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- To ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for child protection, or in her absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), at the earliest opportunity
- To provide safe, confidential systems of monitoring pupils known or thought to be at risk of harm, and contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those pupils.
- To provide effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils.
- To inform parents so that they have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus and making this Policy available to parents.
- To provide a structured safeguarding process, used by all staff, which includes relevant agencies.
- To implement safer recruitment practice in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers (including Governors) to work with children.

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### 5. Responsibilities

The Governor with responsibility for Child Protection is Ruth Balch/Binky Clark. Their responsibilities are as follows:

- ensure that this Policy is in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board policy and Local Authority guidance, and includes procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers; that compliance is made to inter-agency working including early help and inter-agency plans
- ensure that a senior member of the school's leadership team is the DSL for child protection; that they have the required child protection training to equip them to carry out their role effectively and that they receive refresher training every 2 years
- ensure that members of staff are trained according to the policy – ensure that whole school receives regular child protection training every 3 years (as recommended by the LA)
- ensure that a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is appointed, currently Andrea Grafton, and has appropriate training
- ensure that there is an effective staff behaviour policy
- ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by staff
- a Designated Person within school is chosen to be responsible for Child Protection, and that that person receives appropriate training and resources
- all staff and parents are aware of the Policy and procedures
- immediate action is taken to protect pupils where appropriate and parents/carers are informed (except where to do so would increase the risk to the child, or adult or prevent the detection or prevention of a crime) and supported throughout any Child Protection case
- the school will co-operate with relevant agencies in the investigation of allegations of abuse
- when a child changes school, complete school records are sent promptly to the receiving school, and any concerns linked to this are reported. If applicable, the child's social worker will be informed
- appropriate safeguarding responses are made to children who go missing from the educational setting, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify risk of abuse and neglect and prevent any risk for the future
- safe practices are always followed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in charge of Child Protection is Andrea Grafton and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Clare Griffin-Felton, who take responsibility for:

- developing effective links with relevant agencies and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences, core groups, providing written reports etc.
- keeping written records of concern about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately, considering the completion of a CAF and calling a Team Around the Child/Family meeting

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- ensuring all records are kept securely and confidentially, separate from the main pupil file and in locked locations with reference to the NSPCC document 'Records, Retention and Storage'.
- ensuring the appropriate policies are in place,

The DSL will:

- attend relevant refresher courses at least every 2 years
- ensure all staff have access to the policy and understand it
- ensure all staff have induction training and keep a record of all training.
- keep detailed, accurate secure records, including a chronology, to be reviewed and updated whenever a new concern is raised or more information becomes available, and ensure all relevant information is disseminated to staff on a need-to-know basis.
- monitor pupils with a Child Protection Plan.
- contribute to the development of school policies in response to new guidance.
- effectively challenge and support staff in the area of safeguarding.

All staff and volunteers should:

- know who the DSL is and be aware of their child protection responsibilities
- be familiar with the school's policies on restraint, physical contact with pupils and bullying
- attend an appropriate level of child protection training.

### 6. Procedures and Guidance for Managing Allegations/Concerns

Refer to Appendix A for categories of abuse.

#### a. General Concerns

Where a member of staff has concerns about a pupil, even though these may not appear to constitute a child protection matter, they should discuss these with the DSL for early advice to allow a picture of the child's circumstances to be gained over time. All concerns/ observations should be recorded in writing, signed and dated.

#### b. Specific Concerns or Allegations

Where a member of staff sees signs which cause concern or has an allegation or disclosure made to them by a pupil, they should seek information from the pupil with tact and sympathy. In doing this, the member of staff will:

- allow the pupil to talk freely – and listen uncritically, without shock and disbelief
- take the allegations seriously and accept what is said
- only ask open questions, e.g. "Tell me what happened?", "When did this happen?" NOT "Did they do xxxx to you?" or "Was it xxxx or xxxx who did this to you?" Remember the acronym TED (Tell, Explain, Describe)
- reassure the pupil that s/he was right to tell them, that the alleged abuse was not their fault
- not make promises they cannot keep, such as promising confidentiality
- not interview the child, or take statements from the child or any others
- not ask the child to repeat what they have said to any other person i.e. other staff member
- ensure that the pupil is appropriately supported by taking into consideration the child's wishes and feelings when determining what action to take and services to provide and to have systems in place to enable children to express their views and give feedback

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- record all discussions/observations/evidence in writing as soon as possible (however this should not delay the information being passed to the DSL). In the case of disclosures, a record should be made as soon as possible after the event, signed and dated
- report the concerns, allegations and information to the DSL as soon as possible
- share information only within appropriate professional contexts, under guidance from the DSL
- seek support if they are personally or emotionally affected by the experience

### c. When making referrals the DSL will:

- gain the prior consent of the parent/carer, except where to do so would increase the risk to the child, or adult or prevent the detection or prevention of a crime. However, if consent is not given and a pupil is still considered to be at risk of significant harm a referral will be made.
- contact the relevant Locality Team (Bath/North East Somerset Tel: 01225 396314/13), contact the pupil's social worker directly if they have one or contact the Social Services Emergency Duty Team (01454 615165 or 01454 615046) if the referral is made outside working hours.
- confirm a referral in writing within a maximum of 48 hours, ideally 24 hours using form C2. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, and reason for referral, previous concerns, name of person receiving the referral and any advice given. The referral must be signed and dated by the referrer.
- if unsure about a referral, seek advice from Social Care Locality Team, LA Integrated Safeguarding Officer (01225 396974), Children Missing Education Manager (01225 394365) or Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT on 01225 842782/84).
- request to be informed of the relevant discussions between statutory agencies and contribute to them.

Child Protection Procedures require joint inter-agency action once a referral has been made.

## 7. Allegations against Staff (See Section 6 LSCB Handbook)

The Headteacher will contact the Local Authority's Senior HR Consultant, Hester Edmond, who is the manager to whom initial discussion regarding allegations against any adult is referred, (01225 394490). This relates to any member of staff currently working in the setting, regardless of where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations made against a teacher no longer working should be referred to the police. The Integrated Safeguarding Officer is the Designated Officer for co-ordinating enquiries/investigations of any allegations and can also be contacted for advice involving any allegations against staff and any action to be taken, in accordance with this Policy and the LSCB handbook.

Where there is an allegation against the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors will inform the LA Integrated Safeguarding Officer. The Local Authority Designated Officer (Jackie Deas) will need to consider with the Senior HR Consultant who is best placed to investigate an allegation against the head teacher, which would normally be the Chair of Governors as set out in the guidance.

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## 8. Whistleblowing

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. This is in line with the safer recruitment policy and practices. Please also see the Whistleblowing Policy.

- where there are concerns about the behaviour of individuals within the schools or practices (i.e. behaviour management practices), that cause concern or alarm, these must be reported to the Headteacher/DSL in the first instance who must follow the Allegations Management process.
- where practices that raise concern are sanctioned by the Headteacher, these should be shared with the Senior HR Consultant Hester Edmond OR Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Jackie Deas.

## 9. Physical Restraint

Appropriate professional behaviour should be maintained at all times in line with the school's Restraint Policy.

## 10. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- all matters relating to child protection are confidential, therefore the DSL will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.
- all staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard pupils.
- all staff are aware that if a pupil confides in them and requests that the information is kept secret, no promises should be made about confidentiality.
- the intention to refer a pupil to Social Care is shared with parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt we will consult with the Locality Team.
- advice from Locality Team can be sought but the child at this stage should not be identified, unless requested by the Social Worker as part of a child protection enquiry. The member of staff/school must identify themselves

Child protection records will be:

- signed and dated and will state fact not opinions,
- confidential,
- kept, securely locked, in a file separate from the pupil's other details in the DSL's office,
- shared only on a need-to-know basis, through the DSL
- passed to new schools separately from other documentation, clearly marked 'confidential'.

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### **10. Training**

All staff are expected to attend Child Protection Training at least every 3 years (as recommended by the LA). The DSL is expected to attend Child Protection Training at least every 2 years.

### **11. E-safety**

This school operates within the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) e-safety strategy. The school has a separate policy on e-safety that links with this Child Protection policy. Any incidents are recorded and referred as appropriate to the IT provider, local social care team, LADO or police according to the e-safety flow chart. The school has a clear policy known to all staff about any correspondence or contact with children via mobile phones or the internet or any behaviour that may be considered to be an abuse of their position of trust.

### **12. Bullying**

Bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. Bullying will be managed and recorded in accordance with the LSCB requirements.

### **13. Racist incidents**

Racist incidents are set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### **14. Health and safety**

The Health and Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration given to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

### **15. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored annually by the DSL who will report to the Governor with responsibility for CP:

- the number of referrals to social care;
- training undertaken by staff;
- training undertaken by governors;
- any other issues.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

**Policy written in consultation with staff and governors.**

**Agreed by governors: February**

**Last Review: January 2016**

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### Appendix A: Identifying Abuse

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

**Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse 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, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

**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 involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Because of their day to day or regular contact with individual children, teachers and other staff in the education settings and support services are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. Possible indicators of physical neglect and of emotional abuse may also be noticeable. Sexual abuse may exhibit physical or behavioural signs. These signs are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred, but may give rise to suspicion. All staff should be alert to such signs. In some instances, a child may choose to disclose an allegation of abuse to a member of staff.

**Children with special educational needs** may be especially vulnerable to abuse and disabled children, in particular, are at increased risk of abuse for a number of reasons. For example: they may be especially vulnerable to bullying or intimidation; have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse; have communication difficulties which may make it difficult to tell others that is happening; receive intimate personal care from a number of carers which may increase the risk of exposure to abusive behaviour. Extra care should be taken to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse and neglect.

In all cases where abuse is suspected or a sustainable allegation is made, teachers and other members of staff should follow these procedures.