



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Checked and approved by A.Allen SLSCB

## Child Protection Policy

The Headteacher, staff and governors of the Marchant-Holliday School are all aware of our responsibilities and statutory duties under sect 175 of The Education Act 2002, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006), The Children and Young Person's Act 2008, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Vetting and Barring Scheme 2009), and the guidelines which have been updated since. We have given much time and attention to the development of a policy and procedures which we hope will not only enable children to feel safe at school, but also help parents/carers and Local Authorities to feel confident in the arrangements which have been made.

*"Ensuring the safety of every child is an absolute priority". Ed Balls Secretary of State for DCSF 2008*

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. Parents and staff from other agencies working with our pupils may also contact the school with any concerns. There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring we practice a safe recruitment process, by checking the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with children.
2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping staff and children with the knowledge and skills needed to ensure safety.
3. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
4. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

All school staff undertake Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness training relevant to their role. All staff are aware of the need be observant for the outward signs of abuse. They are duty bound to report allegations of abuse and cannot guarantee to keep conversations confidential when this is inappropriate. Effective communication with families and other agencies is fundamental to our approach. The school will therefore:

1. Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
2. Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
3. Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to:

1. Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. (App 1)
2. Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection. (App1)
3. Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and members of the governing body can access the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and understands their role.
4. 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 senior person responsible for child protection.
5. Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
6. Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a child protection plan.
7. Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and contribution to core groups.
8. Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
9. Ensure all records are kept in a secure place, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
10. Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
11. Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
12. Ensure an annual report is made to the Governing body on child protection matters affecting policy and procedures. This review report should record the training received in school, child protection delivery in the curriculum and the number of cases/incidents reported (respecting confidentiality and omitting names and details)
13. Ensure policy is revised and updated annually.

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. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

1. The content of the curriculum.
2. The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
3. Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil including Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
4. Ensuring that, when a pupil with a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
5. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued. It is our aim to establish and maintain a general school ethos of openness and support between staff and pupils. We hope that children will feel free to talk about their feelings to each other and to the full range of staff without fear or secrecy.
6. A balance of male/female staff will be maintained at all times to run all activities.

## **Support**

The school has in place a number of levels of support.

### **The Headteacher**

The Head teacher aims to make himself as available as possible, within the obvious constraints of time, to all pupils so that they may discuss any issue which may be concerning them.

### **The "Special Person" and Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants**

Each pupil is allocated a "special person" who exercises a special pastoral role of support on a day to day basis. The special person is a member of the care staff. During the school day, this special relationship is emulated by each Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant with the children they have in their class.

### **Independent Visitors**

Mr John Oliver is engaged as a consultant by the school as an independent Child Counsellor. He is an education social worker who works for Somerset Social Services Department and has many years experience of working with school age children. Mr. Oliver visits school on a regular basis (two visits per half term) with the specific purpose of making himself available to any pupil who requests to see him. Mr Oliver's visits provide a valuable opportunity for children to discuss, in confidence, issues which may be concerning them.

### **Child Counsellor**

Mr Peter Forgham is currently engaged as a consultant by the school to provide a counselling service for children who are in need of extra support. Mr Forgham is an experienced Child Counsellor who has many years experience of working within the education system. He visits school each week.

### **"Who Can You Talk To"**

Pupils are regularly reminded of the names of adults who will listen to them if they have difficulties, and encouraged to discuss their problems with staff and parents/carers in the first instance. Parents/Carers are encouraged to talk to their children by telephone each week and they are contacted by the school if they fail to maintain regular communications.

### **Childline**

All pupils who attend Marchant-Holliday have access to details of the "Childline" child protection service. They are also allowed access to the telephone as part of the philosophy of openness.

### **Disclosure and Procedures**

**If** - A pupil discloses abuse

A member of staff suspects abuse (at home, at school or between pupils)

A third party expresses concern

A member of staff witnesses an abusive situation

**Staff must** -

Respond without showing signs of anxiety, distress, or shock

Enquire about the injury or distress calmly and without making judgement

Observe carefully the behaviour, body language and demeanour of the child

Listen carefully

Record in detail as soon as possible what has been seen and heard

Confidentiality must not be promised. If any information is disclosed that may cause harm to themselves or others certain actions must be taken. Secrets are not an option

Report directly to the designated person without delay

**Remember** only sufficient information is needed to clarify if something did or could have happened which may be a cause for concern. The child should be encouraged to say what he wants until enough information is gained to decide if a referral is appropriate. It is **important** not to interrogate, not to ask leading questions or prompt, but to listen.

**Use** open questions such as Tell me (tell me what happened)  
Explain (explain what you meant by)  
Where did this happen/where were you  
When did this happen

**Know** when to stop asking questions and when to just listen quietly

If an exchange is overheard between others - listen quietly and remain in the background.  
Record what is heard as verification/ witness statement.

Staff should not seek or wait for proof, investigate themselves or discuss the matter with anyone other than the designated person or senior staff involved.

**Only CSC (Children's Social Care) and CAIT (Child Abuse and Investigation Team =Police) have the authority to investigate allegations of abuse.**

It is the designated person's duty to follow the LSCB procedures, and to liaise with other professionals as outlined in their guidance.

A link to SW Child Protection procedures is on-line and replaces previous guidelines. A contact page is attached (with details current as of November 09) in case technical failure makes this unavailable. (App 2)

In the case of any incident occurring or information being disclosed at school, the first point of contact is Somerset Direct. They will decide how the issue should be dealt with and advise or take details as a referral. If the information is by phone call this should be followed up in writing within 48 hours.

Any child protection issue will be recorded in the school's Non-Accidental Injury Log (NAI) book. The Governor with responsibility and/or Chair of Governor's will be notified and also in the case of a serious incident Ofsted's National Business Unit on 08456 40 40 40

### **Professional Confidentiality**

A child cannot be promised confidentiality where an allegation suggests possible harm. While normally consent to the sharing of personal information is required, law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children.

Wherever possible, consent should however be obtained before sharing information with third parties. (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8) In some circumstances obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child. Disclosure should be justifiable according to the facts of the case and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

### **Record Keeping**

Records should be clear, concise, detailed, factual and not opinion. If handwritten they should be written in black ink and dated and signed.

Records should be cross referenced, by a number to the entry in the NAI book. They should be filed and kept secure in a locked location.

### **Allegations against Staff**

Any allegation against staff must be recorded in the usual way. The school has protocol in place for any concern raised about staff. Should the issue be a concern about unprofessional practice, support and guidance will be put in place. Should the concern be a child protection issue, procedures will be followed as usual. The member of staff concerned may be suspended from contact with pupils until all investigations are completed. In such cases it will be made clear that suspension is entirely without prejudice and does not imply any presumption of guilt.

### **Additional Policies in Place**

In addition to the guidelines in this policy, please see other related policies:

Pupils:           Care Principles and Procedures  
                      Care Policy  
                      Anti-bullying  
                      Behaviour and Discipline

Curriculum:   PSHEC,  
                      SRE,  
                      Drugs Alcohol and Tobacco  
                      ICT Policy

Designated person responsible for Child Protection in school  
Lesley Simpson (School Matron)

Governor with responsibility for Child Protection  
Michael Beaumont (Chair of Governors)

Governor with responsibility for Staff liaison  
Stewart Walker

In the absence of the designated person from school notification of any concern should be to the Headteacher, Head of Care or Deputy Headteacher on duty or on call at the time.

Rod Wilson (Behaviour Support and PSHE teacher) has Level 2 training and will be able to support and advise if available.

Somerset Direct. 0845 345 9122

[http://www.swcpp.org.uk/swcpp/swcpp\\_procedures.htm](http://www.swcpp.org.uk/swcpp/swcpp_procedures.htm)

[www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

[www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk)

Ofsted's National Business Unit 08456 40 40 40

SIX (Somerset Information Exchange)