

# **Lisbellaw Primary School**

## **Child Protection School Policy**



# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **Rationale**

We in Lisbellaw Primary School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy. We seek to protect our pupils by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

## **Purposes**

The purpose of the following procedures on child protection is: -

- To protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school, teachers, non teaching staff, and volunteers has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected.
- Our over-riding concern must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration.  
Where a child is Disabled or has Special Needs including children who are on the Dyslexic Continuum these must be taken into consideration.
- To ensure that all children are listened to and taken seriously.
- To make sure a proper balance is struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interests must always come first.
- To promote co-operation with statutory agencies in the multi-agency response to child protection.

In particular the central principle of our staff support is that every child has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and to have proper care given to their physical, emotional and spiritual well being.

## **Procedures**

Lisbellaw Primary School recognises their five main responsibilities in the areas of child protection - These are prevention, recognition, response, referral and confidentiality/record keeping.

## 1. Prevention

Our school has developed and provides a “child protection ethos” and a preventative curriculum. We aim to offer support and protection to children by:

- Creating a listening environment that makes it easier for children to share their concerns.
- Allowing a variety of opportunities for class and group discussion of thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance.
- Enhancing self-esteem and encouraging social skills, breaking the cycle of abusive behaviour.
- Providing an environment within the school and classroom in which every child is valued as a member of the community.
- Through embedding in the entire curriculum a programme for pupils on personal protection. (See appendix)
- Monitoring children’s welfare and physical, emotional, social, intellectual and behavioural development.
- All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks. The staffs of our school have also adopted a code of practice for our behaviour towards pupils.
- Informing parents of the school’s Child Protection Policy during alternate years.

## 2. Recognition

We use the following definitions for Child Abuse:

**Neglect** - the persistent or significant neglect of a child or young person, or the failure to protect a child or person from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child or young person’s health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

**Physical** - physical injury to a child or young person, whether deliberately inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

**Sexual** - the sexual exploitation of a child or young person for an adult’s or

another young person's own sexual gratification: the involvement of children or young people in sexual activities of any kind (including exposure to pornography) which they do not understand, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violates normal family roles.

**Emotional** - persistent or significant emotional ill treatment or rejection, resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child or young person.

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our educational establishment. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both victim and bully will be personally contacted immediately bullying behaviour is identified.

### 3. **Response**

In the event of an allegation of child abuse the member of staff will:

- Listen to the child or young person and accept what is said
- Record statements
- Explain what they have to do next and to whom they have to talk
- Reassure the child or young person they have done the right thing to talk about it
- Refer information to the Designated member of staff

### 4. **Procedures** for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse.

**The designated teacher for child protection** is Mrs R Coalter (V Principal). In her absence Mrs V Adams (Principal) will assume responsibility for child protection matters.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly.**

**He/she should not investigate** - this is a matter for the Social Services - but should report these concerns immediately to Mrs Coalter, discuss the matter with her and make full notes.

Mrs Coalter will discuss the matter with Mrs Adams as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record is made.

Mrs Coalter in consultation with Mrs Adams will decide whether in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If**

**there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

Mrs Coalter may seek clarification or advice and consult with Ms Nicola Topping or Ms Marian McBride (W.E.L.B. Designated Officers for Child Protection) or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse. Mrs Coalter will inform:

- Social Services
- Ms Nicola Topping or Ms Marian McBride (W.E.L.B. Designated Officers for Child Protection) Tel 028 8241 1289

**(This will be done in an envelope marked “CONFIDENTIAL - CHILD PROTECTION”)**

If a complaint about child abuse is made against a member of staff, Mrs Coalter (or Mrs Adams, if she is not available) must be informed immediately. The procedures as outlined on the previous page will apply. Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairman of the Board of Governors (Rev B. Kerr) will be informed immediately.

If a complaint is made against the Principal, Mrs R Coalter, Vice Principal must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to Mrs Coalter.

## **5. Confidentiality**

It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible child abuse couldn't be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be told.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

All records of child protection concern are kept in separate files in the Principal's office. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child. Proforma's for children about whom there are concerns and for children who have suffered loss, bereavement or change are available and should be completed by teachers and ancillary staff. The class teacher and Principal will monitor these regularly and there will be a note in the child's profile to indicate that such a file exists.

When a child is on the child protection register a separate file will be kept in the Principal's office. The class teacher will monitor the child daily and make a weekly comment in writing in the file. This will be passed to social services at the monthly core group meeting unless there is a need to contact them immediately regarding concern about the child's welfare.

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff and is pursued either as a formal referral or under the school's discipline procedures a summary is entered on a Record of Abuse complaints. This entry will contain details of the complaint; will be made available to the Board of Governors annually.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Staffs are aware of and adhere to the Code of Conduct, which is outlined in the D.E.N.I. document Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection (Appendix 9 pg. 71)

## **STAFF IN- SERVICE**

We are committed to in-service training for all staff.

All teachers, ancillary staff, students and volunteer workers will receive child protection training from the Principal or Vice –Principal on induction.

Further training will be undertaken bi-annually by the Principal or Co-ordinator for Personal Development.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

This policy and procedures will be updated and reviewed annually.

## **RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY ALL STAFF**

All staff have a duty of care and in fulfilling this we safeguard children whilst promoting their welfare and meeting their needs.

It is appropriate that staffs provide such care and help, as is necessary depending on the developmental stage, health or disability of the child whilst always ensuring that safe care practices are followed.

Staff should ensure that:

1. The classroom door is left open if they need to be alone with a child. (Peripatetic teachers, who work with individual pupils, should work in a room with visual access).
2. Where confidential interviews must take place they are conducted in a room with visual access and that another adult has been informed that the interview is taking place.
3. In the event of a child needing a change of underwear and also requires washing parental permission has been given and that another adult is present.
4. They do not transport a child.
5. Any suspicion or misgivings which a member of staff has concerning in-appropriate behaviour or circumstances affecting a child is reported to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection – Mrs R Coalter.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS**

1. There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance, which may include physical comfort such as a caring parent, would give. Teachers and ancillary staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is and what is seen by others present to be, normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same child over a period of time and never when alone with a child.
2. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

This would apply especially in a case where a member of staff had been obliged to restrain a child physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self-injury.

**Date reviewed:** August 2007

**by:** Mrs Coalter with all staff.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Related policies

- Policy for the taking of photographic images
- Policy for use of the internet

## **CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS \_\_\_\_\_



**RECORD OF CHILD ABOUT WHOM THE SCHOOL IS CONCERNED**

**NAME** .....

**DOB** .....

**AGE** .....

**CLASS** .....

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**FAMILY DETAILS**

**ACTION TAKEN**

**SIGNED** .....

**(CLASSTEACHER)**

**DATE** .....

**CHILD PROTECTION**

Class	Ed. Psych	C.P. Record	Bullying	Bereavement	Child	Special
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	Report	of Concern	Incident Form	and Loss Record	Protection Register	Needs register