

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

A POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN SCHOOLS

ALL SAINTS' C.E. (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALREWAS.

This school recognises its legal duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse.

The staff seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. Staff hope that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

If staff have significant concerns about any child which may indicate physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual or neglect, they are required to discuss them with the agencies responsible for investigation and child protection.

Staff who observe injuries which appear to be non-accidental, or who are told anything significant by a child, must report their concerns to the designated teacher.

School staff do not, however, carry out investigations, nor decide whether children have been abused. That is a matter for the specialist agencies.

All staff will be familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents and with the requirements of the local Area Child Protection Committee. Advice may be sought from the Local Education Authority, the Social Services Department or the Police if staff are unsure how to proceed.

Child protection is important. Where appropriate, the governors will endeavour to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

Child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially in Personal, Social and Health Education.

The school will also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. All children will be encouraged to show respect for others and to take responsibility for protecting themselves. Parents are expected to help children to behave in non-violent and non-abusive ways, towards both staff and other pupils.

Parents can feel confident that careful procedures are in place to ensure that all staff appointed are suitable to work with children. More informal procedures are also applied to voluntary helpers, non-teaching staff etc.

If it is necessary to use physical force to protect a child from injury, to prevent a child from harming others, or if any child is injured accidentally, parents will be informed immediately. Children will not be punished within school by any form of hitting, slapping or shaking or other degrading treatment.

Any complaints about staff behaviour may be made to the headteacher, or to the chairperson of the governors. All those involved will be entitled to a fair hearing, both children and staff. Complaints which raise child protection issues will be reported by the school under local inter-agency procedures.

The designated teacher of all child protection matters in the school is Mrs. B. Hunter. The designated governor for child protection matters is the Chair of Governors.

The nominated officer for child protection within the Local Education Authority, if parents are not satisfied with the school's response, is Mr. A. Pointon, Principal Education Welfare Officer, Education Office, Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH (Tel: 01785 223121 Ext. 8957)

ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BODY ON:
May 06

ALL SAINTS' C.E. (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALREWAS, STAFFS.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator: Mr J Gray

Child Protection issues could be important for any child in any school at any time. No school should feel that this is not an issue for them or that only certain kinds of children are at risk. Research has shown that teachers are a vital link in the protection chain. Children spend a large part of their time at school. The relationships there can be very important.

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. The issues may arise with respect to any child, in any school at any time. All agencies which work with children are committed to following the policy as laid down by the Staffordshire Area Child Protection Committee.

All school staff, not just the Child Protection Co-ordinator, should be conscious of their responsibility. Separate leaflets are available for teaching and non-teaching staff to help in raising this awareness. If you have not seen a copy, please ask the headteacher.

Parents, or others who care for children, can harm a child by direct acts or by failing to provide proper care. The perpetration of abuse, though generally an adult manifestation, is increasingly acknowledged to involve child perpetrators.

a) PHYSICAL INJURY

Physical abuse may range from direct blows to chronic poisoning.

b) PHYSICAL NEGLECT

Children need food, warmth and protection from danger.

c) EMOTIONAL INJURY

Abuse can take the form of emotional abuse or cruelty and the only evidence may be abnormal behaviour seen in the child.

d) EMOTIONAL NEGLECT

Love and attention is essential for physical and emotional growth.

e) **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, which violate social taboos of family roles or which are against the law.

f) **POTENTIAL ABUSE**

Children are entitled to protection from situations where they have not been abused but where social and medical assessments indicate a high degree of risk that they might be abused in the future.

If you are uncertain about whether or not an incident may be a child protection issue, trying to answer the following questions may help:

Four questions should be in the minds of professionals caring for children:

- a) **ACCIDENT?** Was this an Accident ?
- b) **BRUISES?** Are these Bruises or other injuries accidentally acquired?
- c) **CARE?** Is the standard of Care acceptable?
- d) **DEVELOPMENT/ DEPRIVATION?** Is he/she developing properly - could he/she be deprived?

If there are grounds for suspicion **BE PREPARED TO ACT** particularly if the child has previously been considered at risk.

If a child discloses something to you, or you have concerns about a child in your class you should report the matter **IMMEDIATELY** to the headteacher and make a brief written record of the initial report.

It is important not to make promises about confidentiality to the child which you may not be able to keep. It is equally necessary to tell the child, if he/she is old enough to understand, exactly what you are going to do. This includes who you are going to communicate with and what information you are going to convey. It is then clear you are listening to what the child says and taking him/her seriously.

REFERRAL

Schools are **NOT** responsible for investigation in cases of actual or potential child abuse. School staff should see themselves essentially as agents of referral. They are not required to take on the task of finding out whether their concerns are justified by interviewing the child/parents. Excessive questioning of the child should be avoided since this could hinder any

subsequent investigation. If there is no clear evidence, it would be appropriate to consult other professionals/agencies to build up a wider picture before referral later.

Any referral should be made immediately, by the headteacher who is the designated child protection co-ordinator, to the local Social Services Office, or in exceptional circumstances to the Police. Initially this should be by telephone and should be confirmed in writing as soon as possible. The referral should begin with the phrase "I am referring this case under the Child Protection Procedures". The referral must be recorded and a copy of the letter sent to the P.E.O. (Special Services). The referral should also be reported immediately to the school Medical Officer/EWO.

Adopted by Curriculum Committee _____

Reviewed September 2001

Reviewed May 06

EDUCATION PROCEDURES

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Education Establishments

- a) In the Education Department, all senior officers are available to provide advice to colleagues in schools, but the co-ordinating ad liaison role is held by the principal education officer (Special Services) on extension 8605. In the absence of this officer, the assistant education officer (Special Services) on extension 8640 or the principal education welfare officer (extension 8957) should be disseminated to all staff as having responsibility
- b) As advised by DES circular 4/99 "Working together for the Protection of children from abuse", each school must designate a senior member of staff as having responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and for liaison with other agencies. It is recommended that the headteacher or his/her deputy holds this responsibility.

Any teacher or other member of staff who is suspicious of, or who have received allegations about child abuse must take the following action.

- a) Report the matter immediately to the headteacher or teacher -in-charge in the headteacher's absence.
- b) The headteacher (or teacher-in-charge) will:

Report the matter immediately to the Social Services Department District Office giving the school Medical Officer's telephone number. To avoid any possible misunderstanding, the message should be prefaced "I am reporting this case under the Child Abuse Procedures". This telephone call should be followed immediately by written confirmation. The letter should be clearly headed "Child Abuse".

Record the allegations and ensure that the teacher(s) providing the information agrees with the written report.

Report the matter immediately to the local school Medical Officer and Education Welfare Officer.

The headteacher may include in the report the name of the person providing the information; it is possible fir the identity not to be revealed although the name of the informant must always be recorded in any school copy.

