



6.4

Child Protection Policy The Downs School

This policy was reviewed at our Inset day in January 2010 and adopted in January 2010.

The policy is to be reviewed during the Spring Term 2011

The names of the designated people are Mr M Gunn, Headmaster and Mrs A Marsden, Head of Pre-Prep (also the designated safeguarding person for EYFS) ('The Headteacher and Designated Person')

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The school will safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at school, in compliance with the DSCF Guidance, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 2004; and in line with locally agreed inter- agency procedures and government publications:

'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2006 HM Govt

'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families', 2000

'What to Do If You Are Worried a Child Is Being Abused', 2006¹

'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education', 2006

'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and other staff' 2005

Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and staff in Education Settings February 2005

Guidance For Safer Working Practice For Adults Who Work With Children And Young People

From September 2009 this policy has been made available to parents on the school website.

¹ What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused HM Government 2006

- 1.2 The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard² and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.
- 1.3 We recognise that all staff³ and governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.
- 1.4 All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- 1.5 The aims of this policy are:
- 1.5.1 To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience.
- 1.5.2 To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- 1.5.3 To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- 1.5.4 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and ensure that we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children.
- 1.5.5 To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils.
- 1.5.6 To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- 1.5.7 To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children.

² Safeguarding (as defined in the Joint Inspector's Safeguarding report) is taken to mean "All agencies working with children, young people and their families should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm to children's welfare are minimised" and "where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take all appropriate action to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies".

³ "Staff" covers ALL adult staff on site, including temporary, supply and ancillary staff, and volunteers working with children

- 1.5.8 To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of our facilities.

2.0 Procedures

We will ensure that:

- 2.1.1 The governing body understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities
- 2.1.2 We have 2 Designated People for child protection who have undertaken Basic Child Protection Training and who undertake other inter -agency training as recommended every two years.
- 2.1.3 We have a member of the governing body- Mrs Louise Grant who will act alongside the Designated People's and in their absence, who has also received basic multi-agency training, and who will have been briefed in the role.
- 2.1.4 All members of staff are provided with opportunities to receive training by the Designated People, or an outside agency in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse every three years. The whole staff received basic training in January 2009
- 2.1.5 All members of staff, volunteers and governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- 2.1.6 All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities in regard to safeguarding procedures through publication of the school's Safeguarding Policy, and reference to it in our parent handbook and on the website.
- 2.1.7 Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time
- 2.1.8 Community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
- 2.1.9 Our selection and recruitment policy includes all appropriate checks on staff suitability including Criminal Records Bureau checks⁴

⁴ Safe recruitment practice means scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and qualifications, obtaining character and professional references, checking previous employment history and that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job, and a face to face interview as well as

- 2.1.10 The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to the DfES Misconduct Team, with the advice and support of Educational Personnel and in accordance with the Barring Regulations⁵
- 2.1.11 Our procedures will be annually reviewed and updated.
- 2.1.12 The name of Designated People will be clearly shown in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- 2.1.13 All adults, (including supply teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers), new to our school will be given a written statement about the school's policy and procedures⁶, and the name and contact details of the Designated People and have these explained as part of their induction into the school.

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 We understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children. This may include contacting the local joint Consultancy Team, a multi-agency group of professional staff experienced in child protection, who will provide consultation and advice for anyone working with children.
- 3.2 We have two Designated people who are responsible for:
 - 3.2.1 Referring by telephone a child's details if there are concerns about his/her welfare, possible abuse or neglect to the local Social Services office. A written record of the referral will be faxed/posted/e-mailed to SSD, (using the multi-agency referral form), and a copy to the LA Lead Officer for Child Protection within one hour of the telephone call or as soon as possible within the school day.
 - 3.2.2 Ensuring that written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
 - 3.2.3 Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records, with a front sheet listing dates and brief entry to provide a chronology.

the mandatory check of List 99, and where appropriate, a Criminal Record Check, as stated in The Downs School Safer Recruitment policy, compliant to Independent School Standard Regulations and DCSF Guidance; Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

⁵ The 'Barring Regulations' are the 'Procedures for Barring or Restricting People made before 20th January 2009 and will be included on the Protection of Children Act List (PoCa) or on List 99

⁶ E.g. a copy of this policy and of the booklet Ten Key Points to follow if you suspect, or are told of, Abuse.

- 3.2.4 Ensuring that an indication for further record keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- 3.2.5 Acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- 3.2.6 Attending (or delegating this requirement to another appropriately informed member of staff) case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributing to the Framework for Assessments process, and providing a report which has been shared with parents.
- 3.2.7 Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's SSD Team.
- 3.2.8 Ensuring that all school staff are aware of this policy and know how to recognise and refer any concerns.
- 3.2.9 Keeping themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant training.

4.0 Supporting Children

- 4.1 We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of worth.
- 4.2 We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 4.3 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- 4.4 Our school will support all pupils by:
 - 4.4.1 Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum.
 - 4.4.2 Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
 - 4.4.3 Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
 - 4.4.4 Notifying SSD as soon as there is a significant concern.
 - 4.4.5 Providing continuing support to a pupil (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under

confidential cover to the Head at the pupil's new school as a matter of urgency.

5.0 Confidentiality

- 5.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 5.2 The Headteacher and Designated Person will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 5.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 5.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being, or that of another.
- 5.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to SSD with their 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 local SSD District Office on this point.

6.0 Supporting Staff

- 6.1 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 6.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Headteacher or Designated Person and to seek further support. This could be provided by, for example, a Matron, by Occupational Health, and/or a teacher/colleague as appropriate.
- 6.3 We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The document 'Guidance for Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings' provides advice on this and the circumstances which should be avoided in order to limit complaints against staff or abuse of trust, and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.
- 6.4 We recognise that designated staff should have access to support (as in 6.2 above) and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings.

7.0 Allegations against staff

- 7.1 All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. (See also 6.3 above)
- 7.2 All staff should be aware of the publication 'Dealing With Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers'.
- 7.3 We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.
 - 7.3.1 If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher/Designated Person or the Chair of the Governors.
 - 7.3.2 The Headteacher/senior teacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the joint officer for Child Protection.
 - 7.3.3 If the allegation made to the member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as 7.3.2 above, without notifying the Headteacher first.
 - 7.3.4 The school will follow procedures for managing allegations against staff, described in the publication 'Dealing With Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers'.
 - 7.3.5 Suspension of a member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult (as in 7.3.2 above) in making this decision.
 - 7.3.6 Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will manage the suspension of adults where necessary from school premises.

8.0 Whistleblowing

- 8.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 8.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude and actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to a governor or the Lead Officer for Child Protection County Hall.

9.0 Physical Intervention/Positive Handling

- 9.1 Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately. (It complies with Guidance, 'The Use of Physical Restraint (Positive Handling) in Schools' (revised January 2006). This policy states that staff must only ever use physical intervention

as a last resort, e.g. when a child is endangering him/herself or others and that, at all times, it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

- 9.2 Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- 9.3 Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention should be appropriately trained.
- 9.4 We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

7 Guidelines for the Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention In Schools – N.Somerset Council 2006

10.0 Anti-Bullying

- 10.1 Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

11.0 Racist Incidents

- 11.1 Our policy on racist incidents is 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.

12.0 Prevention

- 12.1 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- 12.2 The school will therefore:
 - 12.2.1 Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.
 - 12.2.2 Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
 - 12.2.3 Provide across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

13.0 Health & Safety

- 13.1 Our Health and Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment and, for example, in relation to internet use, and when away from the school undertaking school trips and visits.

14.0 Policy Review

- 14.1 The Governing Body and Leadership Group of our school are responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.

ASM January 2010

Date of next review: January 2011