



Cokethorpe
SCHOOL

Child Protection Policy

September 2009

CHILD PROTECTION

The Education Act 2002 lays down statutory duties for schools and governing bodies to ensure the safety of children in their care. Cokethorpe School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

School procedures for dealing with Child Protection may be obtained from the Child Protection Officer, these are issued to all members of staff.

Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected code of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. The policy also aims to make explicit the School's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. The purpose of the policy is therefore, to ensure that child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.

The School fully recognises the contribution that it can make to protect the children and support the children in its care. There are three main elements to Child Protection:

- Prevention (positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models)
- Protection (following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns)
- Support (to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused)

NB: Child Protection extends beyond school time.

Schools do not operate in isolation. Child Protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The School aims to help the children within its care by working consistently and appropriately with child protection agencies.

Whilst all adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children within the School, the following individuals have special responsibilities:

Second Master, Mr Keith Walton, Child Protection Officer (CPO): his role is to co-ordinate all matters relating to child protection issues. These will include:

- Dealing with alleged reports of abuse against children through coordinated action within the school
- Dealing with alleged reports against staff at the School by children
- Making referrals to Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB), Social Services or police when and if appropriate
- Keeping the Headmaster informed of all child protection issues
- Ensuring that the Headmaster, independent listener, school governor responsible for child protection and all staff are aware of the School's Child Protection Policy and procedures
- Ensuring that the Headmaster, independent listener, school governor responsible for child protection and all staff receive appropriate training in child protection
- Awareness of the progress of children placed on the Child Protection Register and attendance as required at subsequent reviews and case conferences
- Ensuring thorough documentation is completed and recorded

Head of Junior School, Mrs Christine Cook: her role is to coordinate all child protection issues in Keith Walton's absence. She will take lead responsibility for safeguarding children from the youngest (including EYFS) to the oldest and liaise with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.

School Governor with special responsibility for child protection, Mrs Glynne Butt: her role is to liaise with the CPO on matters relating to child protection issues and participate in the annual review of the policy and procedures with the governing body.

Independent listener, Mrs Vanessa Francis, independentlistener@cokethorpe.org her role is to act as a sympathetic adult (outside of the School) whom children may approach with their concerns and to inform the CPO of any child protection issues that may be brought to her attention.

Procedures

CPOs shall be informed immediately by an employee of the School, pupil of the School or other persons, in the following circumstances:

- Suspicion that a child is being abused
- Evidence that a child is being abused
- An allegation (formal or otherwise) made by a child against an employee of the School

In the event of an allegation being made against the employee of Cokethorpe School or volunteer, the CPO will keep a full record of reports made and make referrals to the appropriate authorities within 24 hours of an incident being reported or receiving relevant information. The Headmaster will be kept informed at all times. The School Governor with responsibility for Child Protection may be informed.

In the event that allegations are made against the Headmaster, the CPO must be informed immediately and Social Services will be contacted. The School Governor with responsibility for Child Protection and Chairman of Governors will also be informed immediately.

Training and Support

Both CPOs will receive Level C training every two years in line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures (OSCB).

All staff, including the Headmaster, School Governor with responsibility for child protection and the independent listener will receive Level A training every three years. A record of which staff have been trained and the date is kept by the School.

Part time and voluntary staff working with children are made aware of the arrangements for child protection.

All training is coordinated through Oxfordshire County Council Safeguarding team administrator, Mr Alan Blackmore.

Matters relating to child protection (including more recently e safety) are regularly discussed at staff training days.

Appointment of Staff

Short listed candidates will be interviewed and written documentation recorded. Two references will be obtained and kept on file for each successful candidate and any gaps in employment history will be fully investigated. Safe recruitment procedures are followed and members of the SMT are accredited.

All staff working at Cokethorpe School, whether full or part time will be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau, or for longer serving staff, List 99.

Child protection awareness is an integral part of the induction programme for new members of staff.

The School recognises the need to educate parents about the inherent dangers that children face, for example electronic bullying. Evening seminars are held throughout the year to alert parents to dangers.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The School recognises the key importance of professionally prescribed guidelines and communication in issues of child protection.

Records and Monitoring

Well kept reports are essential to good child protection practice. The School is clear about the need to record concerns about any child within its care, the status of such records and when these records should be handed over to outside agencies. A comprehensive list is held with both CPOs and the Headmaster.

All pupils will be supported through:

- The curriculum, to encourage self esteem and self motivation
- The School ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and that gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- Coherent management of behaviour
- A consistent approach that recognises and accepts the cause of behaviour from that which the child normally displays. This is vital to ensure that all pupils are supported within the school setting.
- Liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents

The School will report, within one month of an employee leaving the School, to the Secretary of State via DCSF in Darlington any person whose services are no longer used because he/she is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Children trust and depend upon adults to protect and safeguard them from harm. It is therefore our responsibility, as adults who come into contact with children on a daily basis, to report any suspicious or evidence of abuse that may have occurred or is occurring to a young person whether it is inside or outside School. Members of staff who are in close contact with pupils or teach on a one-to-one basis must ensure that they do not place themselves in a position where allegations may be made against them. In line with the School's 'Use of ICT Policy' staff must not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with any pupil.

Child Abuse is a description of a number of different ways in which people (usually adults) take advantage of and harm children. This can be through neglect (failing to protect a child), physical injury, sexual or emotional abuse.

- The abuser is often a known and trusted person such as a parent, teacher, carer, relative or friend
- Abuse can take place at home, school or anywhere children spend time
- Children can suffer from a combination of these forms of abuse
- Abuse can happen to children of any age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability

Our role:

- To be vigilant at all times of any signs of abuse
- To report quickly and thoroughly
- To be excellent role models

It can take a great deal of courage for a child to talk to an adult because the child is 'telling' on someone who is more powerful than they are. This will, therefore, always be kept in mind: the child may be betraying a person who is not only close to them but also loved by them and they are risking a great deal in the hope that you believe in what they say.