

## **1.0 Rationale**

- 1.1 All children are entitled to protection from abuse and neglect. Abuse is defined as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. This policy has been written to inform members of staff at Berkeley Primary School about the action needed should abuse be suspected. It also emphasises our commitment to keeping children safe by ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed.

## **2.0 Aims**

- 2.1 At Berkeley Primary School we will:
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop; and equip them with the skills to keep safe
  - Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
  - Raise awareness of child protection issues and ensure that all members of staff are alert to the indicators of abuse;
  - Implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse by referring to the Children's Helpdesk
  - Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.;
  - Ensure that children in our care are given the opportunities to develop in line with our school aims.
- 2.2 We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:
- Establish and maintain an environment where children are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
  - Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
  - Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- 2.3 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 When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.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:
- The content of the curriculum.
  - The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
  - The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the 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.
  - Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.

- Ensuring that, where a pupil who has a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **3.0 Guidelines**

- 3.1 At Berkeley Primary School we endorse the view that in any intervention, emphasis should be placed first and foremost on the interest of the child. In the event of any concern being expressed by the school, parents will be contacted and kept informed. However, this will not be the case if serious sexual or physical abuse is suspected.
- 3.2 Most healthy children will collect bruises or other injuries from time to time. Accidental bruising will occur on the skin where it is covering bony prominences (e.g. shin, forehead, elbow, and hipbone).
- 3.3 A small number of children suffer from rare conditions, like haemophilia, brittlebone disease, which makes them more susceptible to bruising and fractures.
- 3.4 The school will ensure that it practices Safer recruitment in line with Government guidance by using at least one NCSL accredited recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures.
- 3.5 The school will follow the guidance from the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board and South West procedures which can be found at [www.gscb.org.uk](http://www.gscb.org.uk). All staff are able to access this document through the School Secretary. The school has registered for updates from this website and will ensure all staff are made aware of any major changes to legislation or practice.

By following this guidance, the school will:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for safeguarding (child protection) who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection who has received appropriate training.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- 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.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a Child protection Plan (previously known as being on the child protection register.)

- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer including supply or agency workers, contractors or governors.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

#### **4.0 Indicators of Physical Abuse**

- 4.1 Where any member of staff discovers a child who seems to require immediate treatment, they should inform the designated officer (name at the front of this policy) who must ensure that the child is sent to the local Accident and Emergency Unit without delay if appropriate. If child abuse is suspected, the Designated Officer will convey the suspicion to the Accident and Emergency staff and will follow the referral procedures to ensure social care are made aware. .
- 4.2 Where any member of staff discovers a child who has unexplained or inconsistent injuries or who shows signs of neglect, but in their opinion does not require immediate treatment, should inform the Designated Officer (name at the front of this policy) who will contact the Social Services Duty Officer without delay. Particular attention should be paid if:

Bruises are:

- Frequent
- Patterned (e.g. finger and thumb marks)
- Old and new (note colour)
- In unusual position (see chart on page 3)

Burns and Scalds have:

- Clear outline
- No/few splash marks
- Unusual position
- Indicative shapes (e.g. cigarette, electric fire)

Injuries maybe suspicious if:

- Bite marks
- Large and deep scratches
- Incisions

Fractures if:

- Numerous
- Unreported
- Healed at different times

Other indicators of Abuse:

- Delay in seeking medical attention
- No explanations or inadequate exploration of injuries
- Child/parent/witness reports abuse
- Changing explanation of injuries
- Recurrent injuries - particularly if forming a pattern (e.g. always on Mondays)
- Inadequate parental concern
- Multiple injuries that occurred at different dates
- Child's behaviour may be lethargic, withdrawn, wary of adults
- Child may be failing to thrive for no apparent reason.

Parents should not be informed of signs of serious physical abuse if it is thought that they might be the perpetrator of such abuse without advice from Social Care.

## **5.0 Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)**

5.1 In the event of sexual abuse being suspected, parents will not be informed before advice has been sought from Social Care.

5.2 The list of possible indicators of CSA below needs to be treated with care and respect. There is a danger of approaching CSA allegations with tunnel vision and presuming that because one or more 'symptoms' are displayed, the child is therefore 'diagnosed' as having been sexually assaulted. Alternative explanations for any of these indicators need to be explored before the assumption is made that the child is or has been sexually assaulted.

5.3 The indicators can be grouped in terms of those, which suggest:

- A high likelihood of abuse, either currently or in the past and which therefore warrant immediate investigation;
- Those which give rise to concern and indicate the need for investigation in order to find a satisfactory explanation;
- Those that indicate a child is troubled. These indicators may be displayed as a result of many difficulties, one of which is sexual abuse.

5.4 It is therefore important that these indicators be weighed in terms of significance and in the context of the child's life, before any assumption is made that the child is or has been sexually assaulted. Some indicators take on greater or lesser weight depending on the child's age. However, a child's verbal allegations must always be treated with the greatest respect. Children are entitled to be listened to and to have their allegations treated seriously. Although there can be occasions when the children invent allegations, as a result of adult pressures or for a variety of other reasons, research suggests that such fabricated allegations are rare and that children are more likely to claim they are not being assaulted when in fact they are.

5.5 Indicators suggesting that there is a high likelihood of abuse:

- Child's own verbal allegation that an assault has occurred;
- Physical symptoms for which the only explanation is sexual activity, including

genital tearing, sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy in younger children e.g. under 14;

- Sexual abuse of younger children;
- Suicide attempts (younger children);
- Compulsive masturbation in an inappropriate setting (younger children);
- Vivid details of sexual activity in talk/play/drawings, showing awareness of penetration, ejaculation, oral or anal sex (younger children).

5.6 Indicators suggesting cause for concern and a need to investigate:

- Suicide attempts (in older children);
- Drug and alcohol abuse;
- Persistent running away;
- Sexualised stories/poems;
- Self mutilation;
- Chronic urinary/vaginal infections or soreness.

5.7 Indicators suggesting that a child is troubled:

- Eating disorders
- School/peer/authority problems
- Hysterical/obsessional symptoms (older children)
- Chronic bed-wetting
- Abdominal pains (younger children)
- Developmental regression.

## **6.0 Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

6.1 The most common form of abuse but the most difficult to define and prove. Emotional abuse is likely to adversely affect the emotional and behavioural development of a child.

6.2 Indicators suggesting emotional abuse:

- Behaviour of child causing concern
- Failure to thrive
- Relationships with peers/teachers/parents
- Emotional instability
- Constant use of bad language

## **7.0 Indicators of Neglect**

7.1 Neglect covers the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development.

7.2 Indicators suggesting neglect:

- Underdeveloped in relation to peers
- Cleanliness and state of clothes
- Inappropriate food or amount of food provided
- Reports of neglect from witness
- Lack of personal hygiene.

## **8.0 Procedures for dealing with cases of abuse**

- 8.1 All staff at Berkeley Primary School will be alert to indicators of abuse.
- 8.2 Where staff see signs which cause them concern they should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy. It is important that staff are aware that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward and therefore, should not ask the child leading questions. For example, staff should say 'tell me what has happened' rather than 'did they do xx to you?' The chief task is to listen to the child and make notes of the discussion to pass to the designated officer. The note will record the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said.
- 8.3 All staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information with the designated officer. If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that s/he has a responsibility to tell the designated officer but that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know. Following discussion appropriate action will be taken e.g. making a referral to Social Care.
- 8.4 In all cases where concern is being expressed by staff, parents will be contacted and kept informed. However, in the event of suspected sexual or physical abuse the parents will not be informed prior to discussing the case with Social Care.
- 8.5 The school will maintain all child protection records in the Headteacher's office. The records will be kept securely locked.
- 8.6 The records will include dates, events and the action taken in cases of suspected child abuse or when the child is provided with a Child Protection Plan, including minutes from Core Group meetings which the school will attend..
- 8.7 If, and when, a child is provided with a Child Protection Plan, the appropriate staff will be informed of the relevant details to ensure they are alert to the situation.

## **9.0 Physical Contact with Pupils**

- 9.1 It is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that teachers should touch pupils only in emergencies. Particularly with younger pupils, touching them is inevitable and can give welcome reassurance to the child. However, teachers must bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. It is important for staff to be sensitive to a child's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately.

## **10.0 Use of Force to Restrain Pupils**

- 10.1 The Education Act 1996 forbids corporal punishment, but allows all teachers to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:
  - Committing a criminal offence
  - Injuring themselves or others

- Damaging property
  - Acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and discipline in the school
- 10.2 The Act does not cover more extreme cases, such as action in self-defence or in an emergency, when it might be reasonable for someone to use a degree of force.
- 10.3 Staff other than teachers and volunteer helpers may also use reasonable force following the above guidelines – but only with the authorisation of the Headteacher. If any staff are being placed in situations where a pupil’s behaviour may result in the use of force then suitable training will be made available.
- 10.4 Records will be kept of any incidents where force is used and parents will normally be informed at the earliest opportunity. Records will include:
- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved.
  - When and where the incident took place.
  - Why the use of force was deemed necessary.
  - Details of the incident, including all steps taken to defuse the situation and resolve it without force and the nature of the force used.
  - The pupil’s response.
  - The outcome of the incident.
  - A description of any injuries suffered by the pupil or others and/ or any property damaged during the incident.

A template (see appendix 1) for staff to record these details is saved in the Teachers’ Shared Network area on the curriculum computer system. Any completed records should be saved in the dedicated folder, including the date in the file name. Staff will be provided with and must read, the Government’s Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People.

## **11.0 Allegations against Staff**

- 11.1 Children can be subject to abuse by those who work with them in any and every setting. All allegations of abuse and maltreatment of children by a professional must be taken seriously and treated in accordance with consistent procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.  
*(Working Together 2006 Chapter 6 page 152)*
- 11.2 The Government’s Allegations Management Procedure will be used in all cases of allegations made against members of staff. *(Working Together 2006 Appendix 5)* Allegations will be reported to the most senior person in school who is not implicated in the allegation or a witness to it. In the event that an Allegation is made against the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will be advised and will be asked to follow the procedure on behalf of the school.
- 11.3 Advice will be sought immediately from the Local Authority’s Designated Officer (LADO) for Allegations Management (01452 426994) AND AN INITIAL Discussion will be held. The school will not undertake any investigation without advice from the LADO.

- 11.4 If the LADO advice is that the allegation should be dealt with by the school, an investigation will be carried out and those involved will be informed of the outcome of this investigation.
- 11.5 If the LADO advice is that a multi agency strategy meeting is required, the school will be part of any multi agency discussions and will engage fully with other agencies to ensure a fair and timely outcome both for the child and the member of staff involved.

## **12.0 Resources**

- 12.1 Further guidance can be found in the Government Document Working Together 2006 and in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007) stored in the Head Teacher's office.
- 12.2 All staff will undertake mandatory Child Protection training every 3 years. The Designated Child Protection officer will undertake multi agency training every 2 years in line with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education. Opportunities for staff to attend other Child Protection Courses will be identified in line with the School Improvement Plan and staff development priorities.

## **13.0 Review**

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2012.

**Berkeley Primary School**  
**Staff Record of Use of Force Involving a Pupil**

Name of member of staff:

Name(s) of pupil(s):

When and where the incident took place

Why the use of force was deemed necessary?

Details of the incident, including all steps taken to diffuse the situation and resolve it without force, and the nature of the force used

The pupil's response

The outcome of the incident

Description of any injuries and/or details of damage to property