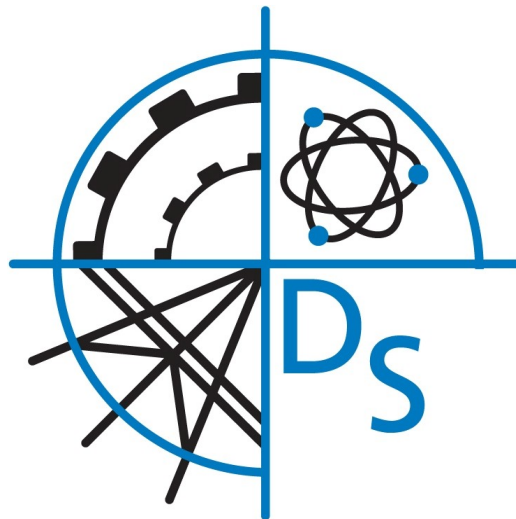


SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR DENEFIELD SCHOOL

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“Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.”

(Working Together under the Children Act 1989)

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This policy provides clear direction to staff and others at Denefield School about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. It makes explicit the school’s commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring will be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Denefield School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. “The welfare of the child is paramount” (Children Act 1989).

2.2 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the School (Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES 2006 issued November 2006 came into force 1st January 2007).

2.3 There are four main elements to our child protection policy;

a) safe recruitment processes are followed to ensure that those who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed

b) prevention of abuse through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and effective teaching and pastoral support offered to students

c) protection of individual children by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns; and

d) support to students who may have been abused.

2.4 This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Denefield School.

2.5 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation and enquiry.

3. SCHOOL POLICY

- 3.1 We recognise that for our students, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- a) establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- b) ensure that students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty
- c) include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PHSE, which equips students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse
- d) include in the curriculum material which will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills; and
- e) ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.

4. FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the West Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within Denefield School and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.
- 5.2 It is the role of the Designated Child Protection Person to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the School, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to Referral and Assessment, West Berkshire, in accordance with school procedures. If for any reason the Designated Child Protection Person is unavailable, a Deputy Designated Child Protection Person has been identified who will act in their absence (see cover sheet). Additionally, it is the role of the Designated Child Protection Person to ensure all staff employed within the School, including temporary staff and volunteers, are aware of the school's internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.

- 5.3 The Governing Body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the School follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the school's recruitment and vetting process, enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), DfES List 99 and other statutory lists and local intelligence checks will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to children.
- 5.4 The role of the Nominated Governor for Child Protection is to ensure that the School has an effective policy, that LSCB Guidelines are complied with and to support the School in this aspect. Governors must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.
- 5.5 The Designated Child Protection Person and the Headteacher will provide an annual report for the Governing Body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.
- 5.6 The Lead Officer in Education for Safeguarding is available to offer advice and support. Specific training is available for the school's Designated Child Protection Person.

6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 All action will be taken in line with the following guidance;
- a) Berkshire Child Protection Procedures online <http://proceduresonline.com/berks> (2009)
- b) When recruiting to posts which involve working with children and/or vulnerable adults, it is essential that safe recruitment processes are followed, including Criminal Record (CRB) checks. "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (DfES 2006, issued November 2006, came into force on 1 January 2007) and can be found at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
- c) "What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused" (published by Department of Health, DfES, Department of Culture Media and Sports, Home Office, Office of Deputy Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellors Department)
- d) "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2006, Department of Health)
Copies of the above can be found in the office of the Headteacher's Personal Assistant
- 6.2 Staff will be kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. There may be other adults in the School who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the School staff. However, the Headteacher will ensure they are aware of the School's policy and the identity of the Designated Child Protection Person.
- 6.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the School who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Child Protection Person, or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Child Protection Person (see cover sheet). In the absence of either of the

above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff available.

- 6.4.1 The Designated Child Protection Person or their Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Duty Social Worker Referral and Assessment Team, Avonbank House, Newbury (see cover sheet).
- 6.4.2 Essential information to be provided will include the student's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given. A telephone referral to the Referral and Assessment Team – in cases where there are immediate safeguarding concerns - should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer. In cases where there have been mounting concerns about a child it is likely that a CAF will already have been completed prior to a child protection referral.
- 6.5 The School will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to the Referral and Assessment Team with the parents or carers unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from the Referral and Assessment Team.
- 6.6 A statement in the School brochure will inform parents and carers about the School's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents can obtain a copy of the School Child Protection Policy on request.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- 7.1 The Head Teacher and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, this will be kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals as set out in 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (DfES 2006). Awareness training in West Berkshire is currently called Level 1 Safeguarding Training.
- 7.2 The School will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Person also undertakes training in inter-agency working and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the School will be made aware of the School's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. There is a specific Designated Person in school training in West Berkshire.
- 7.3 The Safeguarding in Education form will be completed and returned to the Lead Officer for Safeguarding in Education on an annual basis each year. This will be at the beginning of term 2.
- 7.4 Support will be available for staff from the Headteacher in the first instance, and from members of the School's leadership team where there are concerns about queries about child protection.

7.5 All staff will have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are covered in the staff handbook.

8. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Person and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities. Children can be reassured that only the people who “need to know” will be informed, that this will be the minimum necessary and that information will not become common knowledge.

8.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a “need to know basis” only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Denefield School is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within the school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

9.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.

9.3 These file notes will be kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a secure place in the Designated Person’s office. In the same way, notes must be kept of any student who is being monitored for child protection reasons.

9.4 If a student transfers from the School, these files will be copied for the new establishment, forwarded to the student’s new school, marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school’s Designated Child Protection Person.

10. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES & CORE GROUPS

10.1 It is the responsibility of the Designated Child Protection Person to ensure that the School is represented and a report is submitted to any child protection conference called for children on the School roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the School has.

10.2 The School will be part of Core Group for any child subject to Child Protection Plans. Core Groups meet regularly to review and update Child Protection Plans and the Designated Child Protection Person will ensure that the School is represented at these meetings and that a record of the meetings is kept. When a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is the Designated Child Protection Person's responsibility to ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation. The key worker will be informed if there is unexplained absence of two or more days of a student who is subject to a Child Protection Plan. If the school are part of the Core Group then the Child Protection Person should ensure that the school is represented at these meetings; that there is a record of attendance and issues discussed. All concerns about the child protection plan and / or the child's welfare should be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting unless the child is at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Child Protection Person must inform the child's key worker **immediately** and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

11. SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

11.1 Denefield School recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

11.2 The School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

11.3 Denefield School will endeavour to support students through:

- a) the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- b) the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- c) the implementation of the School's behaviour management policies;
- d) a consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued;
- e) regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the students and their families;
- f) a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so;
- g) the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations;
- h) recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse; and
- i) recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and / or protection.

11.4 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in operation at Denefield. These are the policies for the teaching of PSHE, the policy for the management of students' behaviour (including policies on physical intervention and our policy on bullying) and health and safety.

12. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

12.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.

12.2 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Care Services, the Police or in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.

12.3 The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher or a member of staff is set out in Berkshire Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available in the office of the Headteacher's PA.

12.4 The Headteacher or another senior manager should in the first instance contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to hold an Allegation Strategy Meeting. Where the allegation is against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will take this action.

12.5 If for any reason it is decided that an Allegations Strategy Meeting is not appropriate, it may be necessary to address matters in accordance with the School's disciplinary procedures in liaison with the School's HR Advisor.

13. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

13.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the School premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING

14.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

14.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. The West Berkshire Whistle Blowing Policy can be used. It can be found in the office of the Headteacher's PA.

15. POLICY REVIEW

- a) The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy at the Curriculum Committee.
- b) The Governing Body is also responsible for ensuring that the list of key contacts on this cover sheet is kept up to date on an annual basis.

Date established by governing body: November 2009.

Date for full implementation: November 2009.

Date for review: November 2010.

Links:

- Lettings policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Attendance policy
- Physical intervention policy
- (E-safety policy)
- Drugs Education policy
- SEN policy
- Behaviour policy
- Health & Safety policy
- Sex & relationships policy
- (Safer recruitment policy)
- Equal opportunities policy
- PSHEE policy
- Whistle blowing policy
- (Continuing professional development policy)