

**Corby Old Village  
Primary School.**

**Child Protection Policy**

## **Introduction**

Corby Old Village Primary School fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding and protecting children. There are three main elements to our policy:

- Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases of abuse. All staff are vigilant in observing and reporting to the Headteacher any signs of abuse and neglect.
- Support and monitoring of pupils who may have been abused.

This policy applies to all staff, students, teachers on placement, Governors and volunteers working in the school. All adults working in school may become the first point of disclosures for a child. Concerned parents may also communicate with school personnel.

*‘The curriculum needs to be delivered in a school with an ethos which empowers children; a school which allows them to voice ideas, feelings and opinions, treats them with respect, values their contribution and lets parents make a contribution to the educational process.’*

From **‘Responding to Child Abuse’**

## **Aims**

By following child protection procedures we:

- Care for the child
- Care for our school
- Care for the community we serve
- Respond to the guidelines and procedures of other agencies

## **Prevention**

We recognise that high self esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help prevention. The school therefore:

- Seeks to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- Ensures children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- Includes in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equips children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, (e.g. protective behaviours) to have confidence to seek help and to know where to go for help.
- Includes in the curriculum material which will help children develop positive attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to their role as parents.

## **Procedures for identification and reporting cases of abuse.**

It is recognised that teachers play an important role in identifying potential cases of child abuse. It is also important that all relevant agencies involved in child abuse cooperate together for the benefit of the child. Corby Old Village Primary School has a designated teacher for child protection, who liaises with Social Service departments, support agencies and with teachers in school. For this procedure to work, it relies on the skills and expertise of every class teacher and adult within school to recognise or report concerns.

At Corby Old Village Primary School, the Headteacher, Mrs. Helen Williams, is the designated person for child protection. In her absence the next most Senior Teacher will also follow necessary procedures as per this policy and the Child Protection Agency Procedures guidance. All staff have total commitment to child protection. They raise children's awareness about themselves through Personal and Social Education, Health Education, and develop a trusting climate so that children feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings.

Corby Old Village Primary School has a policy of partnership between home and school, but with child abuse, or suspicion of child abuse, our first and only responsibility is to the child. We may not be able to prevent child abuse, but by following child protection procedures, we are trying our best to protect all our children and this is our first and only responsibility.

All teachers make sure, through their care of children, to try to ensure that children keep safe, remain healthy and are able to say "NO". Suspected cases are reported, procedures adhered to and subsequent actions are left to the appropriate agencies. We also care for children who have been abused and understand their problems.

Staff are in contact with children all day and are in a position to detect possible abuse. They must not think that by voicing concern they are necessarily starting procedures. The criteria should be that they have '*reasonable suspicion*' and under the Children Act, 1989, this definition has been extended to include '*or may suffer in future*'.

If a child discloses abuse or staff are suspicious, there are three things to do:

- Report immediately to the Headteacher (designated Child Protection Officer), or the next senior teacher if she is not available
- Do not speak to the parents
- Do not promise the child that it will be kept a secret

It is very important in these cases that prompt and correct procedures are followed under Northamptonshire's Protection Procedures. This document is situated in the School Office in the Headteacher's cupboard.

The reporting teacher will be told of any further action taken ie Social Service referral, monitor etc. If the reported case is taken up and investigated by an external agency, then any meetings, case conferences or action taken will be followed through and the teacher concerned informed.

Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on this register.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

This is intended as a guide. Please remember that the presence of one or more factors does not necessarily give proof that child abuse has occurred. It may, however, indicate that investigation should take place.

- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed
- Incompatible explanations
- Constant minor injuries
- Unexplained bruising:
  - Bruise marks in or around the mouth

- Black eyes, especially if both eyes are black and there are no marks to forehead or nose
- Grasp marks
- Finger marks
- Bruising of the ears
- Linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back)
- Differing age bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns and scalds
- Cigarette burns
- General physical disability
- Unresponsiveness in the child
- Soiling and wetting
- Change in behavioural patterns
- ‘Frozen’ look
- Attention seeking
- Apprehension
- Antisocial behaviour
- Unkempt appearance
- Sexually precocious behaviour
- Sexualised drawings and play
- Sudden poor performance in school
- Poor self-esteem
- Self-mutilation
- Withdrawal
- Running away
- Reluctance to return home after school
- Resistance to PE (undressing)
- Resistance to school medicals
- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Confusing affectionate displays
- Poor attendance – repeated infections etc.

### **Definitions of Child Abuse**

An abused child is a boy or girl under the age of 17 who has suffered from physical injury, physical neglect, failure to thrive, emotional or sexual abuse, which the person who has had custody, charge or care of the child either caused or knowingly failed to prevent. Having custody, charge or care includes any person, in whatever setting, who, at the time, is responsible for that child.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

### **Sexual Abuse**

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

### **Neglect**

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example by exposure to any kind of danger including cold or starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

### **Emotional Abuse**

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment; this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

### **Support and monitoring of pupils who may have been abused.**

Staff have an important role in hearing what children have to say. The school can provide a neutral place where the child feels it is safe to talk. Sensitivity to the disclosure is vital. Staff must listen carefully to what the child is saying, treat it seriously, and value what they say.

Children may feel they will not be believed, or that they will be punished. Staff will need to say that whatever has happened it is not their fault. Fear of the consequences of telling is very common. It can be very tempting to offer a promise of confidentiality to the child. This is not realistic. The child needs to hear the truth about what will happen, together with a commitment to support the child. It is crucial not to ask leading questions. Our role is to enable the child to speak and then know what to do next.

### **In-service Training (INSET)**

At Corby Old Village Primary School we work closely with the Child and Young People's Services. This provides numerous courses specifically aimed at training all teachers in dealing with a wide range of children's needs within the class and school situation. The Headteacher will ensure that all members of staff may receive training in protecting children as appropriate.

### **Support Services**

There are many support, specialist and consultancy services that can be called upon to assist, advise, facilitate understanding and provide expertise.

- LA Support Service – advice to teachers in respect of teaching techniques and strategies, classroom management and curriculum materials.
- Education Welfare Service – work with schools, parents and pupils especially if a child is at serious risk of disaffection or exclusion.
- Inclusion and Psychological Service (IPS) – work with schools, parents and pupils offering more rigorous assessments, more specific advice and support.
- Special Needs Involving Parents (SNIP) - work with parents and offer additional information, help, support and advice.
- Health Professionals and Social Services – can determine underlying problems and provide advice and support.
- The Child Protection Services.
- NSPCC

### **Links with other schools**

There are opportunities for schools within the local area to liaise at SENCO and Headteacher meetings. When a child with Child Protection issues transfers to or from Corby Old Village Primary School contact is made by the Headteacher to pass on relevant information to assist a smooth and easy integration for the child into their new learning environment. Advice and expertise may also be shared between schools by request.

### **Transition between schools**

Close communication between Corby Old Village Primary School and the feeder Secondary schools ensure a smooth transition for all Year 6 pupils.. We endeavour to contact the Child Protection Officer of all receiving schools to discuss issues relating to pupils that are transferring to their school.

### **Confidentiality**

All matters relating to Child Protection are confidential and the Headteacher will disclose any such information on a need to know basis only. Staff need to be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information about the protection of children with other agencies.

The Child Protection contact person is Mrs. Helen Williams.

This document will be subject to a systematic annual review.

The document was written in consultation with the staff and Governors.

**This Policy was reviewed June 2009**