

# Morecambe Bay Community Primary School

## Child Protection Policy

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

The staff of MBCPS recognise the contribution they can make to protect and support pupils in the school. The purpose of this policy is to prevent child abuse and to detect cases of abuse. All staff have up to date and relevant child protection training and are aware of the procedures to take if child abuse is suspected. We recognise that for children, high self esteem, confidence, support and clear lines of communication helps prevention of abuse.

The school will establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are listened to. This will be achieved by creating an environment where children feel valued and confident. The curriculum will include activities and opportunities for PSED to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe. The curriculum also includes material and values which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life. All staff will endeavour that wherever possible effective working relationships will be formed with parents, colleagues and outside agencies.

There are three main elements to this policy

a. Prevention

We endeavour to promote a positive school atmosphere through all aspects of teaching, pastoral work and support to pupils. We will also try to promote child protection issues to parents, guardians, relatives, friends and the wider community

b. Detection and Protection

It is the duty of all staff to familiarise themselves with the following procedures to detect and respond appropriately and sensitively to all child protection concerns

c. Support

The headteacher, DSP (designated senior person), senior management team and school governors will give every support to pupils, school staff and children whom have been abused or are in situations where it is suspected abuse may occur.

## **Underpinning Values**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children have a right to freedom from abuse
- Children have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, as do the adults who work with them
- It is the responsibility of all adults to protect children from harm wherever they are in a position to do so
- Children must have the opportunity to express their views about decisions taken regarding their lives
- All work will be informed by equal opportunities and will reflect diversity of need and community
- All those working with or on behalf of children must reflect and promote the value of working together with parents, colleagues and other agencies in order to create safe environments and protect children from harm.

## **Framework**

Schools do not operate in isolation. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. Sections 27 and 47 of the Children Act place duties on LEA's to assist local authority Social Services Directorates acting on behalf of children in need or likely to be suffering significant harm. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires LEAs and governing bodies of maintained schools to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safe guarding and promoting the welfare of children. In addition to this statutory duty, there exists a pastoral responsibility which recognises that all children who need or use the services provided by a LEA have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

The LEA ensures that the Child Protection Coordinator\* reports to the Education and Cultural Services Executive Management Team at least annually on matters relating to child protection. The LEA will also take seriously its responsibilities to address practice, policy and training issues.

The Child Protection Register is a record of all children in a given area who have been abused within the terms of agreed criteria and who are, as a result, currently the subject of a inter-agency plan to protect them. There is only one CPR in Lancashire which is kept at the Social Services Department Headquarters. The custodian of the CPR is the County Child Care Manager. (01772 264335 or out of hours 01254583777).

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

All adults have a responsibility to protect children. There are key people within school and the LEA who have specific responsibilities under the Child Protection Procedures.

- a) The DSP (Headteacher assisted by Simon Smith has the responsibility for coordinating action within the school and for liaison with the Social Services Department and other agencies. The role of the DSP receive information concerning child abuse from teachers and other staff and take appropriate action. The DSP will keep themselves informed of all legislation and

other information connected with child abuse and in turn pass on relevant training and information to all staff.

- b) The head teacher is ultimately responsible for the whole school policy on child protection and its implementation. The head teacher will work alongside Mr Smith and Karen Aspinall (the on site school social worker). They will keep each other informed of all child protection issues and of specific cases. It is the responsibility of the head teacher and the DSP to complete all necessary documentation.
- c) The role of the Governor responsible for child protection (Mr J Davies) is to ensure that the regulations and procedures are carried out and to liaise with the DSP.

The details of specific cases should be limited to as few people as possible in order to maintain strict confidentiality.

### **Procedures**

We follow the procedures set out by the DFEE and the Child Protection Information Pack of 2004.

Staff will be kept informed about procedures through staff meetings. All staff will be issued with the Child Protection Policy and will receive Level One child protection training. Staff will also be PREVENT trained. Staff will be sent on courses that are deemed relevant by the DSP and Simon Smith. Half termly updates are given to all staff, with regards to the school traffic light system. Children who are deemed high, moderate and low risk are named on this list and staff monitor these children more closely, referring any issues to the DSP or Simon Smith immediately. Alongside this a Special Collection Arrangements List is kept in the main office and staff room where it can be accessed easily by all staff. This is regularly updated. Staff will report any concerns or queries about any child protection issues to the head teacher and DSP, as well as updating their confidential Pastoral Diaries accordingly.

Staff should be prepared and supported to maintain working relationships with parents both before, during and after a referral has been made by IN-SERVICE. This support could include discussions with colleagues who have been through the process, by the head teacher, school based family support worker, school social worker or DSP.

### **Training and Support**

The head teacher, DSP and nominated Governor will attend training relevant to their role and all staff will receive Level one Child Protection training. The head teacher and DSP will ensure that staff have access to this, and other relevant training.

### **Professional Confidentiality**

To ensure the safeguarding of all the children members of staff will not use mobile phones during the course of the normal working day. Mobile phones will be kept in staff lockers or in lockable cupboards in areas such as the school office. The use of mobile phones on the school premises is not permitted for parents or any other visitors to the school site, unless prior permission has been obtained from the head teacher.

Staff, parents, governors and other persons associated with the school will be made aware that the disclosure of any information concerning specific cases of child abuse may endanger the child. If allegations are proven not to be correct this could lead to the prosecution of the person for breaking confidentiality. Disciplinary action will be taken against any member of staff who breaks confidentiality.

If a child makes a disclosure staff cannot guarantee confidentiality to the child. The members of staff have a duty to prevent further abuse to the child by reporting to the DSP or Simon Smith. The DSP or Simon Smith are obligated to inform other professionals. The professionals who require the information relating to specific cases will be made clear in the CAF. Concerns should be brought into open forum with parents or guardians and notes made of their responses.

### **Records and Monitoring**

Well kept records are essential to good child protection practice. The school will maintain accurate and relevant child protection records. These records are kept in a secure place which is separate from all other records pertaining to the child. Child protection records are subject to the arrangements for maintaining confidentiality and will be kept for a period of no less than 7 years after the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday of the child. The records will only be accessed and maintained by designated persons.

The school will keep and maintain records which detail allegations of abuse against any member of staff working in a paid or voluntary capacity, whatever the outcome.

If there are any concerns about the welfare or the behaviour of a child, observations and conversations with dates are recorded in the pastoral diary of the member of staff concerned. This information will be passed immediately to the head teacher or DSP. The flow chart contained in the appendices to this document will then be followed. It may be deemed that in the case of injury a referral may be required if there are frequent injuries, supervision concerns, differing versions of events from parent and child, if the child's response is concerning, or if the parent is unable to offer a reasonable explanation.

The teacher held notes become part of the school record when the matter is discussed with the child's parent or guardian. This and subsequent conversations will be dated and logged on a child's chronology. Parents and guardians can have access to the chronology, but information on child protection is confidential to the relevant professionals only and not to the parents.

The school refers children about whom there are concerns that are not child protection issues to the Pastoral Support Group, that meets weekly in school. This group of professionals will then prepare an action plan and appoint a key person to oversee the programme of work.

If a child moves school copies of records and monitoring are sent.

### **Child Protection Conferences**

A Child Protection Conference is convened for any child who appears to meet agreed criteria defining child abuse and is chaired by the Child Protection Conference Coordinator in the Social Services department. The Child Protection Conference provides the prime forum for professional and the family to share information and concerns and to analyse and determine the level of risks to the child and make recommendations for action. In the case of a Child Protection Conference, a representative from the following must be invited:

Social Services

Custodian of the Child Protection Register

Community Paediatric Consultant or Senior Clinical Medical Officer

General Practitioner

Health Visitor or School Nurse

NSPCC

The Probation Service

The Police Service

The parents of the child and a supporter (if desired)

The child

The Head Teacher

A representative from the school(s) attended by siblings

Area/Senior Education Welfare Officer

County Council Chief Executive/Clerks Department Legal Section

The person(s) attending a Child Protection Conference from MBCPS would be the head teacher, DSP, school social worker or the school based family support worker. County courses and INSET is available to staff who are required to attend Child Protection Conferences. The member of staff would follow guidelines from the head teacher and DSP to produce relevant, concise and professional reports whilst attending Child Protection Conferences.

### **Supporting Pupils At Risk**

The school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. The school can often be the only stable, safe and predictable element in their lives. Whilst at school their behaviour may be challenging. (see behaviour policy). We also acknowledge that some children who experience abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach so that the child can receive

appropriate help and support. The school aims to support all pupils through a curriculum designed to build esteem and motivation alongside a positive, supportive whole school ethos.

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work in any capacity with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and /or EBD will need to be particularly aware of signs of abuse. It also needs to be stressed that in a home environment, where there is drug/alcohol abuse and/or domestic violence, children will be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

This policy should be considered alongside other documentation, including

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Individual risk assessments for pupils and staff (when required)