

## Headington Quarry Foundation Stage School

### **Safeguarding children Policy**

Our child protection policy reflects our school's commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children within our school.

We believe that children have the right to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. We therefore aim to provide a caring environment in this school and a curriculum in which children's self-esteem and autonomy are nurtured.

#### Aims and objectives

- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need for child protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse,
- To provide a clear statement on how the school will act to promote the welfare of children.
- To support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To establish ways of working together with other agencies in line with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board to work together more effectively to promote children's safety.
- To promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence
- To ensure all staff appointments follow OCC Safe Recruitment guidelines

#### Procedures

The school will follow the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) procedures, the key principles of which are:-

- Written notes, signed and dated, will be kept at each stage and stored in a secure place.
- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Staff will maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Staff when recruited will need to obtain enhanced disclosure checks from the Criminal Record Bureau (if not current). OCC Safe Recruitment guidelines must be followed for all staff appointments. In cases of suspected child abuse the school has a responsibility for referral to the Children & Families Assessment Team or the police. Parents and carers must be informed by the school. The only exception to this would be when disclosing to parents could compromise the safety and welfare of the child
- Immediate action to refer or consult is required where there is suspicion of physical or sexual abuse or neglect.
- Investigation is the responsibility not of school but of Children & Families Assessment Team and the police.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised with children at any time
- The school takes stringent security steps to ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children

- Children will be assured that they can approach an adult if they are worried about anything and will receive an appropriate and supportive response.
- If a child who has a Child Protection Plan leaves school to go to another school or setting the information will be forwarded to the new setting immediately and the child's Social Worker informed.
- If a child who has a Child Protection Plan has an unexplained absence of more than 2 days we will contact Children & Families Assessment Team
- Ensure that staff attend case conferences and core –group meetings for children at HQFSS. If this is not possible then a written report should be prepared and sent to the conference.
- Staff (including students and volunteers) will only use school cameras and print photos off at school. It is recognised that photographs and film can provide a record of children's activities and achievements and a tool for staff training and staff and pupil observations. Additional parental permission will have to be sought for research/any other reason. Staff should not use or carry mobile phones or any other equipment with camera facilities when children are present and not take photos with phones. The exception to this is when taking children out on visits when staff are required to carry a mobile phone for health and safety reasons. It is not to be used for anything other than essential phone calls. Mobile phones should only be used in staff breaks/in the staff room or office facilities. This protects staff from being distracted in their work, and from allegations of inappropriate use. Their phones will be kept in the staff room or locker.

The school will display a notice advising visitors and parents/carers that mobile phones are not to be used in the school or daycare. If a visitor or parent/carer is seen using a mobile phone they will be asked to use it away from the setting. The above procedures for mobile phones also apply to any other electronic device with visual recording facilities. Staff should ensure that their families know to call the school phone for emergency contact.

Lesley Carrington is the designated lead with responsibility for Safeguarding Children at Headington Quarry Foundation Stage School.

Her role is to:

- To be conversant with OSCB procedures in Oxfordshire and recent legislation.
- To co-ordinate the safe-guarding children procedures within the school.
- To organise training for all staff. All new staff will receive a copy of the policy and be aware of procedures on induction. All staff should receive Safeguarding Children training, as appropriate to their role in school. There should be refresher training every 3 years for Level A staff and the designated lead should be retrained every 2 years in Level C training.
- To take the lead in referral to outside agencies, and in continuing to maintain partnership and communication with them.
- To ensure OCC Safe Recruitment procedures are employed
- To ensure all staff are sufficiently supported with supervision as appropriate

The school governor responsible for Safeguarding Children is Katherine Bull. The governor responsible for Safe Recruitment is Anna Guarnieri.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding governor to make an annual report to the full Governing body on Safeguarding Children issues and ensure a copy of the report is sent to the OSCB.

HQFSS Headteacher and the safeguarding Governor meet each term and Safeguarding is a regular item on the Full Governors Body meeting agenda.

In the absence of the Headteacher a member of the senior leadership team will take responsibility for all immediate Safeguarding Children concerns following the school procedures. During school holidays when daycare holiday play-scheme is running the daycare co-ordinator will be responsible for dealing with immediate Safeguarding concerns.

### **Sharing concerns**

Consultation is a crucial requirement whenever there is any concern that a child may be subject to abuse, even when it is not immediately apparent that an urgent referral is appropriate.

- Children & Families Assessment Team ask us to keep a noted record of low level concerns over a period (on a password protected file) before referring a family to the assessment team.
- Urgent or emergency situations require referral to the assessment team immediately or to the police. Actual physical injury, verbal statements of actual abuse and evidence of serious neglect justify an urgent referral.
- Evidence of domestic violence requires referral of the family to the assessment team.
- The family must be informed that the referral has been made, and told the reasons for concern. The C & F Assessment Team must be told what has been said to the child's parents/carer's.
- Parents are made aware of this policy and procedures via the prospectus and the whole policy is available on the school web-site or parents may request a hard copy
- Write down the name of the C & F Assessment team worker who was spoken to with a record of the date, time and details of the discussion.
- Write down and subsequent conversations held with parent's / carer's
- Inform OFSTED of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any member of staff
- Ensure good communication and sharing of best practice between HQFSS and St.Andrew's Primary School regarding Safeguarding of children in Rainbow Group through the joint steering group and joint safe-guarding meetings.( See procedures for 'Safeguarding in Rainbow Group' document)
- All employees, volunteers and Governors should report any inappropriate behaviour which they see in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate. Their confidentiality will be respected. (See Whistleblowing Procedure).

### **Disclosures**

Where a child tells you that they or another child is being abused, staff should:

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Reassure the child as far as possible but don't promise confidentiality as staff have a duty to refer all disclosures for further investigation

- Do not ask 'leading' questions: these could later invalidate evidence
- Ask open questions
- Explain what you have to do next and who will be told
- Record child's name, address, age, date & time of observation or disclosure, write down any non verbal behaviour and the actual words used by the child rather than 'interpretations'. Report to designated lead and record accordingly.

### **Allegations against staff**

We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff action within the school, which may include an allegation of abuse through the Complaints procedure.

- Dependent on the nature of the complaint, each stage will be followed through the complaints procedure and factual information recorded from the outset.
- If a member of staff is informed about a possible allegation they should immediately notify the Headteacher
- Contact should be made with the OSCB who will support the school with next steps in the investigation. Under no circumstances should the Headteacher/ Governors conduct their own investigation until the matter has been agreed with the OSCB & appropriate agencies.
- If an allegation is made against the Headteacher this will be investigated by the Local Authority and Chair of Governors.

### **Possible Action following an Allegation**

#### **1. No further action:**

- Headteacher to let member of staff know and the parents of the child concerned. Inform parents and member of staff in writing of the decision that no further action will be taken. The member of staff can have a friend or trade union representative during this discussion
- Determine whether child needs further support or is an indicator of other concerns.
- Prepare a report giving reasons for the conclusions and clearly state on staff records that she/he has been exonerated and consideration of disciplinary proceedings are not necessary.
- Consider what action is required to avoid a repeat of the allegation.

#### **2. Possible inappropriate behaviour:**

- Headteacher and OSCB/ other agencies will agree that this matter falls into the category of inappropriate behaviour as opposed to child protection.
- School to complete an investigation within agreed time scale to be sent to OSCB and parent to be informed.
- Headteacher and governor discuss situation with OSCB, Children & Families Assessment Team to determine strategy to be undertaken. This may mean suspension or allocation of member of staff to another area of the school during investigation
- Where a member of staff is suspended /dismissed from the school we notify OFSTED.

## **Resources**

- Oxon. Area OSCB procedures: [www.Oscb.org.uk](http://www.Oscb.org.uk)
- Children & Families Assessment Team (Oxford City) Phone: 01865 323048
- After 5.00 p.m. call: 0800833408 for the Emergency Duty Team
- Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit: 01865 335200
- OFSTED : 08456404040
- Schools Safeguarding Team: 01865 815956 ( Barry Armstrong)
- NSPCC Child Protection helpline : 0800 800 5000
- See booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for the flowchart of procedures to follow.
- Links to school Behaviour Policy: please see separate policy

Approved by governors:

Date: Sept 2011

Date for review: Sept 2012