

Safeguarding of Children

Child Protection Policy Statement Whole School Policy Including EYFS

June 2011

Wilmslow Preparatory School

is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people to be cared and educated in. We work with parents and other child centred professionals in order to create this safe environment for our pupils.

Wilmslow Prep believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide protection for all the children and young people who are in our care
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Wilmslow Preparatory School.

*Our Safeguarding of Children Co-ordinator is Mr Paul Reynolds. Mrs Helen Rigby will deputise in his absence. The Senior Designated Person for EYFS is Mrs Christa Rodwell. Mrs Christa Rodwell has the required level of training which is updated every two years. Our Safeguarding Governor is Mrs Eileen Parris. Their phone numbers can be found in the School Office (01625 524246).

*This policy is reviewed and updated annually.

*The last Safeguarding Children Training for all staff took place on Inset Day, April 26th 2010, and there are two yearly updates.

*Safeguarding Children Training is included as part of Staff Induction for all new staff and Governors.

* Records are kept securely in the Headmaster's Office.

At Wilmslow Preparatory School we recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is of paramount importance
- all children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse and have the right to freedom from abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all our staff and volunteers need to be carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- providing regular training for all staff in safeguarding children and child protection matters
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse or issues relating to child welfare.
- providing parents/carers and children with the opportunities to voice any concerns they may have
- ensuring that access to confidential information is stored and managed in accordance with National Guidance.
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely and ensuring that all necessary checks are made
- improving knowledge of children, parents/carers, staff and volunteers by sharing information about child protection and encouraging good practice
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for all staff and volunteers through supervision, support and appropriate safeguarding training –the SOCCO will undertake training every 2 years and the staff every 3 years.
- Setting down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection in accordance with locally authority guidelines and in negotiation with the local authority.

We are also committed to ensuring that our child protection policy is a living document which is reviewed and updated at least annually.

Safeguarding of Children

Child Protection Procedures

This document is based on the Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board policy and procedures.

Everyone within Wilmslow Prep should be familiar with, and follow the procedures for, promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children and know who to contact to express concerns about a child.

Everyone must remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. Under no circumstances should anyone within WPS begin to carry out an investigation into suspicions or concerns about a child. This is the role of the statutory services and any concerns or worries should be passed to your SOCCO (Safeguarding of Children Coordinator, Mr. P. Reynolds).

Identification of different categories of abuse

A child is considered to be abused, or at risk of abuse by parents or carers when the child's basic needs are not being met either intentionally or non-intentionally. A child's basic needs include:

- Physical care and protection from harm
- Love and security
- Praise and recognition
- Intellectual stimulation and development

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. There are 4 categories of abuse:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. This includes fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, harm to a child.

The signs of physical abuse may include:

- bruising — it is important to note that most children will collect cuts and bruises in their everyday life usually on the bony parts of their body
- An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks or fingertips
- although bruising is the most common injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child that may cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Emotional abuse may also include developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, causing children to feel frightened and/or exploited.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- a failure to thrive or grow
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviours e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking, showing signs of withdrawal
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self harm
- fear of parent/carer being approached regarding their behaviour

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as over eating or anorexia
- self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have a secret they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- unwilling or unable to make friendships (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults or peers
- using inappropriate vocabulary which may include words of a sexual nature normally beyond their understanding

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may involve:

- a failing to provide adequate food,
- shelter and clothing
- failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger
- failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- neglect of a child's basic emotional needs
- failure to ensure satisfactory education

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and / or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised

It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

Please remember that a child who has suffered any form of abuse may need gentle support to manage their emotions and improve their well being.

Procedures to follow when responding to signs or suspicions of abuse

Refer to Appendix 1 – the Flow Chart : ‘What to Do If You’re Concerned a Child Is Being Abused’.

Wilmslow Prep Staff will always endeavour to safeguard its pupils by valuing them, listening to them and taking them seriously.

If a member of staff or a volunteer has reported concerns they have about a child, or about the behaviour of someone in the School, it is important that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The School needs to make sure that:

- a written record is made of the observations or the information received.
This should be done with the named person, Mr. P. Reynolds
- the record is signed and dated
- details are completed on the proforma ‘Getting in touch with the Social Care Access Team’ (Appendix 2)
- **the Social Care Access Team is contacted and their advice and guidance must always be followed .**
- if a referral is made by telephone, it needs to be confirmed in writing within 48 hours

Social Care should acknowledge the referral in one working day. If the School has not heard within three working days, they should contact Social Care again.

Please refer to the Contact Telephone numbers sheet for contact details.

(see attached Appendix 2)

Procedures to follow when responding to allegations of abuse against someone not working at Wilmslow Prep

This may be against a parent, carer or anybody else in contact with the child and the procedures outlined in the previous page should be followed.

If the allegation is one of sexual abuse or the child is at risk, then the parents/carers should **not be** approached prior to contacting Social Care.

When speaking to parents/carers, of concerns, the problems need to be discussed, an agreement sought and the reason for making the referral explained. This initial discussion may well be between just the Form Teacher and the parent, with the knowledge and support of the Head, Mr. Paul Reynolds or the Deputy Head, Mrs Helen Rigby after confidential discussions. The procedure for handling these issues has been discussed in training sessions for Safeguarding Children. If the teacher feels unable to speak on her own to the parents, then she can arrange this meeting with either Mr Reynolds or Mrs Rigby present. If there are concerns which a teacher feels unable to discuss with a parent, he/she must discuss this with the Headteacher. A careful record will be kept of all these discussions, which will be kept confidential by the Headteacher.

If the parents/ carers are not prepared to meet or do not agree with the School, WPS staff must remember the safety of the child is always paramount and sometimes the parent's/carer's wishes may need to be discounted.

Procedures to follow when responding to allegations of abuse against a member of staff.

A 'member of staff' refers to any individuals who are or were **formally or contractually** entrusted with the care or control of a child outside of their immediate family members or family friends. They will invariably hold or will have held, a **DUTY OF CARE** to the child.

The three categories of allegation are:

Child Protection; Criminal Investigation and Disciplinary Actions.

(For additional information see LSCB Manual of Procedures in Cheshire.)

At all times the child's needs will be paramount.

All the information must be accurately recorded, dated, signed and kept in a secure place.

Where an allegation relating to a member of staff is made the SOCCO, Mr Reynolds must be informed.

Any allegation should be reported immediately to the Social Care Access Team and their advice followed. They will provide advice as to whether the allegation is to be the subject of a multi agency investigation or dealt with internally.

Where a multi-agency investigation is undertaken, the Children Safeguarding Unit will co-ordinate the initial response and arrange a strategy meeting. They will normally inform the Police and other agencies including Ofsted and Surestart Cheshire.

Social Care and the Police will jointly conduct any formal investigation. They will advise Wilmslow Prep about the process and brief them on any issues. Investigations impact on all parties and by their nature they are complex and sensitive. The Social Care and Police will carry out enquiries as quickly as possible and will offer advice to all parties to minimise the anxiety and stress for children, parents, members of staff and the School.

Wilmslow Prep will set up an initial support system for the employee and identify a named contact for the employee. For additional information refer to 'Child Protection — A guide to what may happen if an allegation is made against a childcare worker'. (Appendix 4)

The suspension of a member of staff who is the subject of an allegation is a decision for the employer. Where child protection or criminal allegations are concerned, the Children Safeguarding Unit will provide advice and guidance, taking into consideration:

- the risks presented to the child or other children
- the risks presented to the staff member.
- the risks presented to the School

If the advice given is that the allegation should be dealt with internally, a responsible person should be identified to investigate any issues. This will normally be the SOCCO, Mr Reynolds.

In such cases the School will need to consult with Ofsted and SureStart Cheshire to ensure that practice and professional issues are identified and addressed.

Enquiries should be dealt with in accordance with employment legislation and professional guidance.

On conclusion of the enquiry the School must inform the Children Safeguarding Unit of the outcome.

Procedures to follow when responding to a child disclosing abuse- what to do and say.

Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for children with disabilities and for children whose first language is not English.

When responding to a child making an allegation of abuse you must:

- stay calm
- listen carefully to what is said
- find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others. Do not promise to keep secrets.
- allow the child to continue at her own pace
- ask questions for clarification only
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible -- note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- contact the Social Care Access Team- it is important to note that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about a child.

(See page 10 titled Recording and Information Sharing)

Named Person- Safeguarding of Children's Co-ordinator (SOCCO)

The name of the practitioner who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children at WPS is Mr. Reynolds.

Everyone at Wilmslow Prep must know that Mr Reynolds is the SOCCO and that he can be contacted at anytime during the school day or at home in the evenings and holidays. It is the responsibility of the SOCCO to:

- provide information and advice on child protection within WPS
- co-ordinate action within the School and liaise with the appropriate agencies
- ensure that the child protection policy and procedures are fully implemented and followed
- review and update the Safeguarding policy and procedures as appropriate. This will be carried out annually at the very least.
- be aware of the local statutory child protection network, the role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and be familiar with local child protection procedures
- know where to access the relevant contact numbers and addresses of the statutory agencies
- inform the Children's Services Access Team of relevant concerns regarding individual children
- ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, within 48 hours
- liaise with the agencies as appropriate and keep the relevant people within Wilmslow Prep informed about any action taken and any further action required
- ensure records are maintained of the action taken
- receive relevant up to date training and advise on the child protection training needs of all the staff
- deal with the aftermath of an incident in the School and debrief staff as appropriate

It is NOT the role of the School to decide whether a child has been abused or not. However it is everybody's responsibility to ensure that concerns are shared and appropriate action is taken.

It is NOT the role of the School to investigate any allegation of child abuse. This is the role and duty of Social Care and the Police.

Recording and Information Sharing

Record full information about the child at the first point of contact, including names(s), address(es), gender, date of birth, name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility (for consent purposes) and primary carer(s) if different. This information must be kept up to date.

In all situations it is vitally important to record the details of an allegation or reported incident.

An accurate note should be made of:

- date and time of the incident or disclosure
- people who were involved
- what was said or done and by whom
- any action taken by the School
- any further action e.g. suspension of a worker
- names of persons reporting and to whom

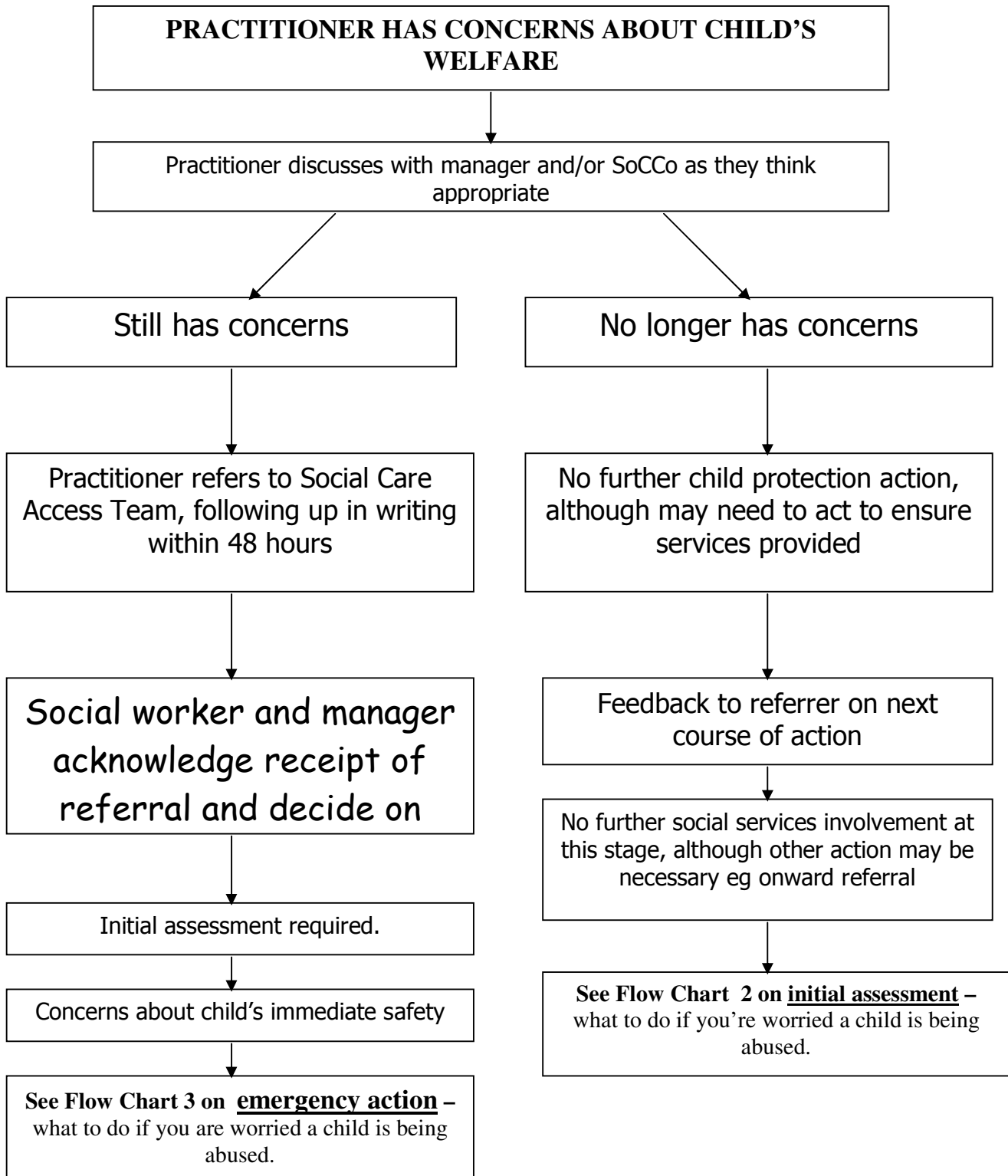
The record should be clear and factual as it may be needed by child protection agencies. It should be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

All recordings should be completed immediately or at the earliest opportunity and must not be left until the following or later days as this may contaminate the information that may be used as evidence in any prospective court proceedings.

Confidentiality policy

The legal principle that the ‘welfare of the child is paramount’ means that the considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the School, should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm. However, when an allegation has been made and is being investigated, every effort should be undertaken to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

What to do if you are concerned



Staying Safe

Our Safeguarding of Children Coordinator is: Mr Reynolds

Our local contact numbers are:

Social Care Access : East Team 01625 374700

West Team 01244 973400

Fax; 01625 410746

Police 0845 458 0000

Emergency Access Team

–Out of Office Hours 01606 766 11

Non Urgent Enquiries Saturdays 10-4pm 01606 766 11

Other useful numbers:

Children’s Information Service 0800 0852 863

School Doctor Kenmore Medical Centre 01625 532244

Appendix 3

The School will report to the Secretary of State, via the DfES, within one month of leaving, any person (whether employed, contracted, volunteers or student) whose services are no longer used because he/she is considered unsuitable to work with children. (Failure to make a report constitutes an offence which could have the School removed from the DfES register of Independent Schools)

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body undertakes an annual review of the Safeguarding Children – Child Protection Policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which related duties have been discharged. A named Governor, Dr Gill Scott, participates in the school's training with regard to child protection procedures.

Reviewed: Autumn 2010

Next Review: Autumn 2011