

## Child Protection Policy

Toynton All Saints Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school, including those on work experience.

Whilst it is our intention to equip children to look after themselves and encourage them to talk to us about any problems they may have, it is still our responsibility to do what we can to ensure their safety. We believe that “Stay Safe” is a crucial objective in the Every Child Matters Agenda which leads to children achieving the 4 remaining objectives of ‘Be Healthy’, ‘Enjoy and Achieve’, ‘Make a Positive Contribution’ and ‘Achieve Economic Well Being’.

### There are five main elements to our policy:

- ◆ Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- ◆ Raising awareness of Child Protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- ◆ Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse (abuse definitions are attached in Appendix I).
- ◆ Supporting any pupil who has been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- ◆ Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- ★ Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- ★ Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- ★ Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to:

- ★ Ensure we have a designated Senior Person for Child Protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- ★ Ensure we have a nominated Governor responsible for Child Protection.
- ★ Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and every member of the Governing Body knows the name of the designated Senior Person responsible for Child Protection and their role.
- ★ Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated Senior Person responsible for Child Protection.
- ★ Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for Child Protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.

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- ★ Notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection Register.
- ★ Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- ★ Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- ★ Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- ★ Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- ★ Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed (see Policy of Safer Recruitment)

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school a child's behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- ✓ The content of the curriculum.
- ✓ The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- ✓ The School Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- ✓ Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- ✓ Ensuring that, where a pupil on the Child Protection Register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's Social Worker is informed.

## Appendix I

### Definitions of Child Abuse

#### Physical injury

- Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as 'factitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy' and is now known as 'Fabricated' or 'Induced' illness

#### Neglect

- Children or young people who have been persistently or severely neglected physically, to such an extent that their health and development are impaired.
- Particular attention is drawn to food, hygiene, warmth, clothing, supervision, stimulation, safety precautions and medical care. Serious inadequacies in these areas may constitute neglect.
- The persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or emotional needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child/young person's health or development.
- It may involve the parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

#### Failure to thrive

- Children or young people who have been medically diagnosed as suffering from severe non-organic failure to thrive, for example hair loss, poor skin tone, circulatory disorders, significant lack of growth. Although more easily recognisable in younger children it also applies to older children.

#### Emotional abuse

- Children or young people where there is a persistent coldness, hostility, or rejection by the parent or care-giver, to such an extent that the child's behaviour and development are impaired, to include self harm, physical or otherwise.
- Persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on that person's emotional development.
- Emotional abuse may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, although it may also occur alone.

#### Sexual abuse

- The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and young persons in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, and which violate social and family taboos.
- Sexual abuse may also include exposure of children to sexual stimulation inappropriate to the child's age and level of development.
- Involves forcing or enticing children 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 sex (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts.
- They may include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### Potential abuse Children

- In situations where children have not been abused but where social and medical assessments indicate a high degree of risk that they might be abused in the future, including situations where another child in the household has been harmed, or where the household contains a known abuser.

**These categories of abuse are not necessarily exhaustive, nor are they mutually exclusive. All of them may result in failure of the child to thrive.**

### Sign and Symptoms

#### Sign of Physical abuse

- \* unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- \* improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- \* refusal to discuss injuries
- \* untreated injuries
- \* admission of punishment which appears excessive
- \* bald patches
- \* withdrawal from physical contact
- \* arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- \* fear of returning home
- \* fear of medical help
- \* self-destructive tendencies
- \* aggression towards others
- \* running away

#### Signs of Emotional abuse

- \* physical, mental and emotional development lags
- \* admission of punishment which appears excessive
- \* over-reaction to mistakes
- \* continual self-deprecation
- \* sudden speech disorders
- \* fear of new situations
- \* inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- \* neurotic behaviour (for example rocking, hair twisting, thumbsucking)
- \* self-mutilation
- \* fear of parents being contacted
- \* extremes of passivity or aggression
- \* drug/solvent abuse
- \* running away
- \* compulsive stealing, scavenging

#### Neglect

- \* constant hunger
- \* poor personal hygiene
- \* constant tiredness
- \* poor state of clothing
- \* emaciation
- \* frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- \* untreated medical problems
- \* low self-esteem
- \* neurotic behaviour
- \* no social relationships
- \* running away
- \* compulsive stealing or scavenging

#### Signs of Sexual Abuse

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- \* sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
- \* displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age
- \* tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- \* tendency to cry easily
- \* regression to younger behaviour, such as thumb sucking, play with discarded toys, acting like a

baby

- \* complaints of genital itching or pain
- \* distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, a baby-sitter or lodger
- \* unexplained gifts or money
- \* depression and withdrawal
- \* apparent secrecy
- \* wetting, day or night
- \* sleep disturbances or nightmares
- \* chronic illnesses, especially throat infections and venereal disease
- \* anorexia or bulimia
- \* unexplained pregnancy
- \* fear of undressing for gym
- \* phobias or panic

### Guidance for Staff

If you have reason to believe a child may be the victim of child abuse you have a duty to report this to the Headteacher immediately. At Toynton All Saints School the Acting Headteacher is the designated "responsible person".

If a child discloses to you, you must:-

- \* never promise confidentiality
- \* never question the child in such a way that ideas are suggested
- \* listen, try not to make judgements
- \* always believe
- \* do not promise anything
- \* stress that telling you is not wrong
- \* support, reassure, take your time

If the disclosure proves to be unfounded the member of staff should never feel they were in the wrong for taking the matter on. A child's welfare is paramount.

Where there is cause for concern the Designated Responsible Person for Child Protection will follow the procedure laid down in the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Code of Practice. In outline this will involve:

- \* contacting Children's Services or the Police
- \* recording all relevant information
- \* sending written confirmation of the referral

- ★ Information relating to any Child Protection issue will be kept confidential to those immediately concerned and should not be widely discussed.

### Staff Code of Practice

All Staff will be given a copy of the Staff Protection and Staff Conduct Policies which are updated regularly as and when new advice becomes available.

It is acknowledged that the person involved in the disclosure (i.e. the member of staff) may need support through what can be a traumatic time and will receive that support initially from the Headteacher - with whom they should feel free to discuss the matter.

This policy will be amended to take account of changes in future guidance and legislation.

Updated September 2009

**Toynon All Saints Primary School**