



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Updated: November 2008

Ratified by GB: November 2008



C O N T E N T S

INTRODUCTION

- 1. MISSION STATEMENT (Vision, Ethos and Aims)**
- 2. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**
- 3. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**
- 4. PRIORITIES**
- 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 6. SUPPORT**
- 7. PROCEDURES**
- 8. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE**
- 9. RECORD KEEPING**
- 10. CONFIDENTIALITY**
- 11. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF**
- 12. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**
- 13. CONTACT NUMBERS**
- 14. ORGANISATIONS AND BOARDS**
- 15. REFERENCES, GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND ACTS**



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Chrysalis School for Autism fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and provide a stable, safe and caring environment for Children to develop educationally and socially. The safety and security of our pupils is our highest priority. This policy is designed to help tutors, child-care officers and other professionals, other school staff, parents, Governors, visitors and pupils achieve the highest standards possible to ensure the safety and security of pupils at our school.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. 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. *(Please also refer to CRB and HR Recruitment Policy and Procedures)*
-
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. *(Please also refer to PSHE; Behaviour Policy and Procedures and Point 4, in this document; Roles and Responsibilities)*
-
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. *(as per Point 6 in this document – Procedures)*
-
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan. *(As per Point 7 in this document – Disclosures)*
-
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. *(Please also refer to Health and Safety Policy and Procedures)*



1. **MISSION STATEMENT (VISION, ETHOS AND AIMS)**

Chrysalis School for Autism aim to provide individualised based education for children on the autistic spectrum, aged between four and fourteen years of age

We provide one to one specialist teaching via our curriculum and adherent to our school policies using the methodology of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), where we promote and develop life skills in a supportive and nurturing environment where children, staff and parents work in partnership.

Chrysalis evaluates and addresses, on an on-going basis, children's individual needs so that each child can achieve his/her fullest possible potential. We encourage a willingness to grow and develop, embracing new ideas and reviewing procedures as new research and guidelines become available, always with the benefit of the children and the school as the central focus. and in accordance with the Every Child Matters agenda:

Chrysalis is of the view that all our pupils are entitled to the same rights as others of the same age in society irrespective of religious or cultural background, ethnicity, gender or race and should be valued as individuals who have a right to an education suited to their own individual needs in a therapeutic and accepting school environment

We aim to offer a school environment in which:

- Pupils feel safe, secure, valued, listened to and are taken seriously at all times.
- Children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- To implement our school ethos, where each member is respected and encouraged to work together within a culture based environment and on mutual trust and co-operation, in conjunction with our Code of Conduct.
- Children are given the opportunity to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We have a strong envisage on encouraging our children by:

- Being healthy, enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
- Staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect



- Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
- Making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society
- Economic well-being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

Chrysalis School for Autism follow the procedures set out by the *Local Safeguarding Children Board* and take account of guidance issued by the *Department for Education and Skills* to enable the school to support pupils 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.
- 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 we follow statutory guidelines in relation to the health and safety of all members of our school community.

We continue to be actively engaged and involved with the local community, disseminating information about autism and seeking opportunities for our pupils to take part in social and life skills-based learning within the local environment.

We aim to continue to work alongside other organisations to promote an understanding of autistic spectrum disorders and to promote awareness within our local community.



2. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

We will follow the procedures set out by the *Local Safeguarding Children Board* and take account of guidance issued by the *Department for Education and Skills* 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 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.
- 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.

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 their 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.



3. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The Children Act 2004 provides the legal framework for the protection of children in the UK. *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 1989* sets out how all agencies and professionals should work together to promote children's welfare and protect them from abuse and neglect and requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Area Child Protection Committee.

Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused, or is at risk of abuse – these procedures should cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse.

DfES Circular 10/95 (Protecting Children from Abuse the Role of the Education Service) places the following responsibilities on all schools.

Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.

A Designated School Child Protection officer should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and for liaising with other agencies

Staff with designated responsibility for child protection should receive appropriate training. Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Area Child Protection Committee.

Schools should have procedures, of which all staff are aware, for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse.

Circular 10/95 also states "parents should be made aware of the school's child protection policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interests of the child.

Our policy and procedures have been integrated into those agreed by the Local Area Child Protection Committee, in line with the Department of Health's Children Act 1989 and "Working Together" especially the information from 6.2 to 6.37 of that document.



4. PRIORITIES

When to be concerned

Staff should be concerned if a pupil:

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries, even when apparently reasonable explanations are given.
- Offers confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained;
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behaviour, which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age; discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Designated School Child Protection Officer is to:-

- Ensure that the Child Protection School Liaison Officer Team's procedures (CPSLO) are followed in the school.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff.
- Ensure that the Principal is kept fully informed of any concerns.
- Maintain effective working relationships with other agencies and services,
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns e.g. refer to Social Services.
- `Liaise with Social Services teams over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked "strictly confidential".
- Submit reports to, and attend, Child Protection Conferences.
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as at risk.
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

6. SUPPORT

Dealing with a disclosure from a child is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff concerned should consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated School Child Protection Officer / Line Manager.

7. PROCEDURES

Procedures followed by The Chrysalis School For Autism are according to the Manual of Child Protection Procedures, Hertfordshire (The White and Pale Blue File on shelf in our office) We have also integrated "Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999", especially 6.2 to 6.37 of that document into our procedures, in line with those agreed by the Local Area Child Protection Committee and in line with the Department of Health's Children Act 1989:



Any member of staff with immediate concerns about a child must inform the Designated School Child Protection Officer.

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.

The Designated School Child Protection Officer will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the Social Services Department. If it is decided to make a referral to Social Services, this will be done without prior discussion with the parents.

If a referral is made to Social Services, the Designated School Child protection Officer will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the Social Worker dealing with the case within 48 hours.

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk, or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register.

If a pupil who is on the Child Protection Register changes school, the Designated School Child Protection Officer will inform the Social Worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.

8. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- a) Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- b) Accept what is being said
- c) Allow the child to talk freely
- d) Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
- e) Not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to Social & Caring Services
- f) Reassure the pupil that what has happened is not their fault
- g) Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- h) Listen, rather than ask direct questions
- i) Ask open questions rather than leading questions
- j) Not criticize the perpetrator
- k) Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told

9. RECORD KEEPING

When a pupil has made a disclosure, the member of staff should:

- a) Make some brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- b) Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- c) Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- d) Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury
- e) Record statements and observations, rather than interpretations or assumptions



All records need to be given to the Designated Senior Person promptly.

No copies should be retained by the member of staff (Proforma available on the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning).

All reports and information held in relation to child protection are confidential. Information will only be passed on, on a 'Who needs to know' basis. The records will be kept up to date. They are not common property.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- All staff in schools, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of students with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children Schools and Families and the Police).
- If a student confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tell the student sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the student's sake. Within that context, the student should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it
- Staff who receive information about students and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

11. ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF

If a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Principal.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Principal. A record of the concerns must be made, including a note of anyone else that witnessed the incident or allegation.

The Principal will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the local Social Services team in accordance with the child protection procedures. In doing this, the Principal may consult the Child Protection Education Welfare Officer, Head of Education Welfare Services, or a Senior Officer from Social Services.

If the Principal decides that the allegation warrants further action through child protection procedures, he/she must make a referral direct to the local Social Services team. If the allegations constitutes a serious criminal offence, it will be necessary to contact Social Services before informing the member of staff.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Social Services the Principal will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.



If the concerns are about the Principal, the Head of Children's Services must be contacted.

The procedures for responding to allegations of abuse involving staff in schools issued by the Area Child Protection Committee are kept by the Designated School Child Protection Officer.

12. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

All parents need to understand that schools have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their students, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures, and that a school or institution may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a Child's welfare."

Chrysalis School for Autism has a copy of Hertfordshire Area Child Protection Procedures, both of which are available for parents/carers to see."

Our Principal, Elizabeth Dun, is the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection. She will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns parents/carers may have about Child Protection Policies and Practice

Alternative contacts are:

- Children, Schools and Families: **01438 737500**
- Hertfordshire Police Child Protection & Investigation Unit:
This is a specialist team with County responsibility for child protection investigation and can be contacted on 0845 33 00 222
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline **0808 800 5000** is a free 24 hour service which provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. The helpline is staffed by experienced social work counsellors who will speak to you in confidence and if necessary make direct contact on your behalf with Children Schools and Families **01438 737500**, the police or your local NSPCC team.
- **Child Line** 0800 1111 is a free advice service for children worried about all kinds of abuse and problems.



13. CONTACT INFORMATION

School: The Chrysalis School for Autism, St Giles Parish Centre, Codicote, Hitchin, Herts SG4 8XX
Tel: 07800 576410
Principal: Elizabeth Dun
Chair of Governors: Karen Colpitts
Child Protection Governor: Karen Colpitts
Designated Officer: Elizabeth Dun
Designated Deputy Officer: Anna Wood

School Liaison Officer for Child Protection (East): JANE HARDY, Children Schools and Families, Hertford. Telephone No: 01438 737500

Hertfordshire Police Child Protection & Investigation Unit:

This is a specialist team with County responsibility for child protection investigation and can be contacted on 0845 33 00 222

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline **0808 800 5000** is a free 24 hour service which provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. The helpline is staffed by experienced social work counsellors who will speak to you in confidence and if necessary make direct contact on your behalf with Children Schools and Families **01438 737500**, the police or your local NSPCC team.

Child Line 0800 1111 is a free advice service for children worried about all kinds of abuse and problems.

14. ORGANISATIONS AND BOARDS

- Local Safeguarding Children Board -
<http://www.hertsdirect.org/infobase/docs/pdfstore/hscbpro07.pdf>
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
www.hertsdirect.org/caresupport/childfam/childprotection/acpc/procedures
- Department of Education and Skills –
- <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/gose/educationSkills/?a=42496>

15. REFERENCES

School Policies and Procedures:

- School Prospectus
- Curriculum Policy
- CRB Policy
- HR Recruitment
- PSHE
- Behaviour
- Health and Safety
- Staff Handbook

Government Policies and Acts

- Every Child Matters Agenda
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims/>
- Children Act 2004
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/ukpga_20040031_en_1
- Working together to Safeguard Children 1999 (2006 revised)
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4007781
- DfES Circular 10/95 (Protecting Children from Abuse – The Roles of the Education Services)
http://www2.essex.ac.uk/clc/hi/childright/article/189/cr189_3.pdf
- Hertfordshire County Council Child Protection Procedure Manual
http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hscb_SafeguardingChildrenProcedures/chapters/p_all_against_adults.html
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education
<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk>
- What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused
www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/06/13/03/04061303.pdf
(pdf file)
- IRSC Designated Senior Person Information Pack This has many pages of references and web addresses on a wide range of relevant subjects
www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank