

- It is important that no-one feels afraid about passing on concerns. The information may be a small piece in a bigger jigsaw and may help to get a better understanding of a child's predicament. Any concerns, however seemingly trivial, should be passed on to the designated Child Protection Teacher.

Guidance for recording information

Concerns should be recorded on the proforma held in the school office as soon as possible and any note should include the following:

- *The nature of the concern;*
- *what is the evidence that led to the concern;*
- *what the child said (if a discussion has taken place); and,*
- *what the member of **staff*** did or said in response (if a discussion has taken place).*

It may be that the concern is very vague but it is still best to discuss the concern with the Designated Senior Person.

Dealing with issues of child abuse can be distressing for the adult to whom the abuse is disclosed or who has concerns. It is terribly important that that adult talks about their feelings after the event. However, it is also very important to remember that children's details and names must remain confidential and any discussion undertaken does not allow the child to be identified to anyone else.

Whistle blowing

This is an outline of the formal procedure that any member of our school community can utilise if they have a concern about the conduct of a **staff*** member. This is supported by the guidance in the code of conduct. The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide avenues for staff* to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Allow staff* to take the matter further if they are dissatisfied with the school's response
- Reassure staff* that they will be protected from reprisals of victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith.

How to raise a concern

People are encouraged to set out in writing the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation.

If **staff*** do not feel able to put their concern in writing, the matter can be raised by telephone or by way of a meeting with the nominated governor (Anne Ewing). In any event, people should try to make an immediate note of relevant details, e.g. what was said in a telephone or other conversation.

People are encouraged to express their concerns at the earliest opportunity. Normally, the earlier a concern is raised, the easier it is to take action. (When raising a concern, people must declare any personal interest they have in the matter.)

Although people are not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for a concern. However, there should be no attempt to investigate a concern or accuse individuals directly. It is best not to discuss concerns with anyone other than the nominated governor.

How the concern will be dealt with

The person with whom the concern is raised will write personally to the person who has raised the concern within 10 working days:

- Acknowledging that the concern has been received
- Indicating how she/he proposed to deal with the matter
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a response.

People raising a concern will be informed of the final outcome of any investigation. In some circumstances however, it may not be possible to reveal the full details where this relates to personal issues involving a third party.

If you have any queries regarding the information contained in this leaflet, or require further clarification of any points, please do not hesitate to contact Jackie Chalk.

St George's Church of England Primary School



Summary of the Code of Conduct, Child Protection and "Whistle Blowing" procedures.

**An information leaflet for
staff, parents, volunteers
and visitors to the school**

Introduction

As an adult on the school site, either as a parent, a volunteer, a member of staff or someone who has come to work with our children in any other capacity, it is important to be aware of the Code of Conduct, Child Protection and Whistle Blowing procedures in place within the school. These procedures are in place to protect not only the children but to protect us as adults from putting ourselves in a vulnerable position and leaving ourselves open to any allegations. They also give each and every one of us an appropriate framework within which to raise a concern about the conduct of anyone who has contact with the children.

Below is a summary of these policies and procedures. Full versions of all these policies are available in school; please see the Head Teacher for a copy.

*** When the word “staff” is used, this covers all people working on site including volunteers.**

Code of Conduct

This is an outline of acceptable behaviours of all adults who are working with children. It is not an exhaustive list.

- Information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person. No **staff*** member should use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations).
- All **staff*** have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general.
- A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However **staff*** should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their role which may be different to that adopted in their personal life. **Staff*** should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

- It is crucial that any physical contact with pupils is appropriate to the **staff's*** role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. **Staff*** should, use their professional judgement at all times.
- No one should make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional, personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate a child or adult within the school community, or might be interpreted as such
- **Staff*** must maintain the highest standards of dialogue when speaking to any member of the school community ensuring that people are always spoken to with respect, control and appropriate language.
- **Staff*** who are also parents must not confuse the 2 roles and should treat all children, including their own, as equal members of the school community irrespective of any personal involvement with children's families.

Child Protection

This is an outline of what constitutes a child protection issue and what an adult should do if a child discloses information to them, or if they have a concern.

There are four categories of abuse

- *Physical abuse*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Emotional abuse*
- *Neglect*

Any member of **staff*** may be approached by a child who wants to talk to them about something that has or is happening to them. They will tend to choose someone that they trust or know well and this will not always be their own class teacher. It may be someone that reads with them regularly and with whom they have formed a good relationship.

There may however be occasions when a member of **staff*** has cause for concern either about marks or bruises on a child, about something they say or the condition that they are in at school, e.g. dirty, smelly or hungry.

Disclosure of abuse by a child

If a member of **staff*** is approached by a child wanting to talk, they should listen positively and reassure the child. They should try and ensure a degree of privacy, but this may not always be possible.

Whilst this can be an alarming situation to be in, it is important not to let the moment pass – for every child that does finally disclose information, evidence shows that they have usually tried up to 12 times before.

Helping the child when abuse is disclosed.

- Be prepared to listen and comfort.
- Do not show revulsion or distress, however distasteful the events are.
- Stay and calm and controlled.
- False promises should not be made, i.e. that the information will be kept a secret or that the police will not be involved.
- The child should know at once that it was not his/her fault and this should be restated.
- A child should be reassured that they were right to tell, even though the abuse may have happened a long time ago.
- As soon as possible a first hand account of what was said and done should be written, using the child's own vocabulary.
- Children should be made aware that their disclosure will be reported only to those who need to know and can help.
- The child should **not be questioned**; involvement should be limited to listening only.

Staff* must remember that it is not their responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse, only to report them to the Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection (Jackie Chalk), or in her absence, to the Deputy DSP (Pip Hunt)

Dealing with concerns about a child's welfare

- **Staff*** might have concerns about a child's well-being even if the child has not actually said anything. If such a situation arises, the designated child protection teacher should be made aware of the concerns.