

Highfield Humanities College

HIGHFIELD





Humanities College
"Working Together"

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We aim to provide a supportive, friendly learning environment that promotes high achievement, a desire to learn and respect for others.

Highfield Humanities College is committed to high achievement, effective teaching and learning and good relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the wider community. The School promotes the knowledge, skills and attributes essential for adult life in a rapidly changing technologically based society. The wider community is embraced as a valued contributor to pupils' attainment and personal development.

Compiled by: S. Dewhurst	Date: 1/06/2006
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DDA Compliant: 	

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR HIGHFIELD HUMANITIES COLLEGE

“Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.”

(Working Together under the Children Act 1989)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 An effective whole-school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school’s commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Highfield Humanities College takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. “The welfare of the child is paramount” (Children Act 1989).

- 2.2 Section 175 of the Education Act 2003 places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

- 2.3 There are three main elements to our child protection policy;

- a) Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to pupils.
- b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- c) Support to pupils who may have been abused.

- 2.4 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Highfield Humanities College. This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. SCHOOL COMMITMENT

- 3.1 We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

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- a) Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE, which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse. Further information can be obtained from the school's PSHE coordinator(s).
- d) Include in the curriculum material, which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills. Further information can be obtained from the school's PSHE coordinator(s).
- e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

4. FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 Schools do not operate in isolation. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Blackpool Area Child Protection Committee (BACPC).

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 All adults working with or on behalf of the children have a responsibility to protect children. There are, however, key people within schools and the LEA who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.
- 5.2 It is the role of the Designated Child Protection Coordinator to ensure the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate referrals to Blackpool Social Services in accordance with school procedures. In this school the **Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator** is **Sara Dewhurst** (Assistant Headteacher). Additionally, it is her role to ensure all staff employed within the school are aware of the school's internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this. If for any reason she is unavailable, two **Deputy Designated Child Protection Co-ordinators** have been identified who will act in her absence **Diane Austin** (Assistant Head Teacher) and **Gerard Brady** (Head of LAC).
- 5.3 The Governing Body and senior school staff are responsible for ensuring that the school use safe recruitment processes are always followed. As part of the schools recruitment and vetting process, enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), DfES List 99 and other statutory lists and local intelligence checks will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to children.
- 5.4 The role of the nominated governor for child protection is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the BACPC Guidelines are complied with, and to support the school in this aspect. It is important to stress that governors are not given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.
- 5.5 The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator, with the Headteacher provide an annual report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.
- 5.6 Representatives from the Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board are available to offer advice, support and training to the school's Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.

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6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 All action is taken in line with the following guidance;
- a) Blackpool Child Protection Committee (BACPC) Guidelines, a copy of which is available in Sara Dewhurst's Office;
 - b) "Safeguarding Children in Education" (DfES / 0027 / 2004)
 - c) "What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused" (published by Department of Health, DfES, Department of Culture Media and Sports, Home Office, Office of Deputy Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellors Department)
 - d) Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999, Department of Health).
- 6.2 Staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. Other adults in the school rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the school staff. However, should there be a need for this (e.g. supply teachers) the Head Teacher will ensure they are aware of the school's policy and the identity of the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- 6.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator *Sara Dewhurst* or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Child protection Coordinator, *Diane Austin/Gerard Brady*. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.
- 6.4 The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator or their Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agency (i.e. Blackpool Social Services) by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined within the BACPC Guidelines Book..
- 6.5 The telephone referral to Blackpool Social Services will be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer. Where possible the Professional and Agency Referral Form (Children and Young People) should be used.
- 6.6 A copy of the referral should be sent to Julie Smith (Senior Pupil Welfare Officer) at Blackpool Council, Whitegate Manor, 261 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool, FY3 9JL
- 6.7 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care Services with the parents or carers unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from Blackpool Social Services or The Police.
- 6.8 A statement in the school brochure will inform parents and carers about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents can obtain a copy of the school child protection policy on request.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- 7.1 The Head Teacher and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals.

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- 7.2 The school will ensure that the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator, also undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by the LEA, and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date.
- 7.3 Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- 7.4 Support will be available for staff from the Head Teacher in the first instance, and from members of the school's leadership team where there are concerns about queries about child protection.
- 7.5 All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.

8. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

- 8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.
- 8.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

- 9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- 9.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.
- 9.3 These file notes are kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a secure place (*Sara Dewhurst's Office*). In the same way notes must be kept of any pupil who is being monitored for child protection reasons.
- 9.4 If a pupil transfers from the school, these files will be copied for the new establishment and forwarded to the pupil's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.

10. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

- 10.1 The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator will normally attend a child protection conference called in respect of a pupil. If it thought to be more appropriate, the child's Head of House may attend instead. They may be accompanied by other relevant staff if this is of benefit the pupil.
- 10.2 The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator will be available to offer staff attending a child protection conference the necessary support and guidance.

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11. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

- 11.1 Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.
- 11.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 11.3 This school will endeavour to support pupils through:
- a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
 - b) The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
 - c) The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
 - d) All staff will agree a consistent approach which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued.
 - e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
 - f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
 - g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
 - h) Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems, will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
 - i) Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- 11.4 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are the policy for the teaching of PSHE, the policy for the management of pupils' behaviour (including our policy on physical intervention and our policy on bullying) and our health and safety policy.

12. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

- 12.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.
- 12.2 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Services, the Police or in some cases, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.
- 12.3 The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out within Chapter 10 of the BACPC Child Protection Procedures.
- 12.4 The Head Teacher or another Senior Manager should in the first instance contact the Education Safeguarding Service. Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to make a referral to Social Services. Where the allegation is against the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors will take this action.

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- 12.5 If for any reason it is decided that a referral to Social Services is not appropriate, it will be necessary to address matters in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures in liaison with the school's HR Advisor.
- 12.6 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

13 WHISTLEBLOWING

- 13.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 13.2.1 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to the nominated 'whistleblowing' governor or the Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board.

13 POLICY REVIEW

- 13.1 The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.